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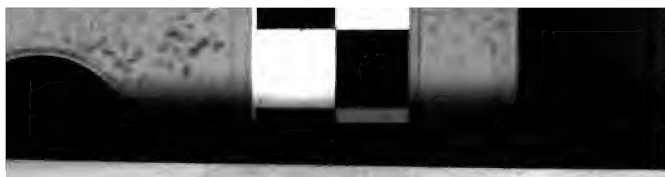
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# THE HOMILIST.

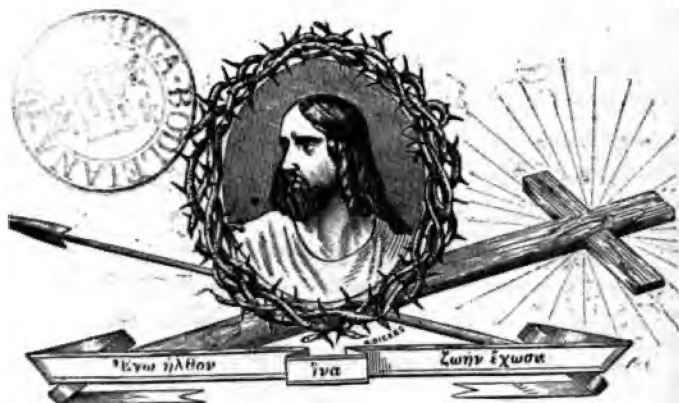
CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "CRISIS OF BEING," "CORN OF CREEDS," "PROGRESS OF BEING," "RESURRECTIONS," &c., &c.

VOL. III. THIRD SERIES.

VOLUME XIV. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



THE LETTER KILLETH BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

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## PREFACE.

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THIS Volume is the third of the *Third Series* of the work. The only difference between this and the preceding series, consists in its enlarged size and half-yearly issue. The friends of the "Homilist" will be glad to know that although this is the fourteenth volume, the work was never in greater demand than at present.

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the "Homilist," and no new specific description is requisite, the thirteen-years-old preface may be again transcribed.

"First: The book has no *finish*. The Editor has not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly, but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented 'germs,' which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

"Secondly: The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to 'our body,' or to 'our Church.' As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the 'Homilist' to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

"Thirdly: The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which



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constitute what is called the 'orthodox creed'—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently, to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, 'Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.'

"The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the 'last day' prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the 'Homilist' did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavors to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!"

DAVID THOMAS.

*Loughborough Park,  
Brixton.*

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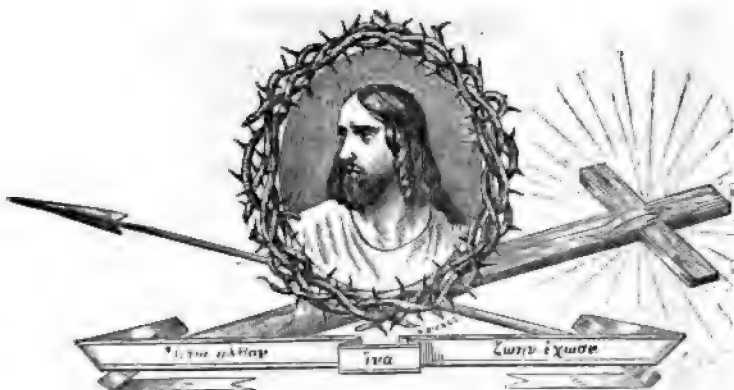
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“The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”—PAUL.

# A HOMILY

ON

## The Box of Spikenard.

“For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.”—Matt. xxvi. 12.

**I**T is a rare and difficult thing in this world to escape misconstruction and reproach. No matter how simple an action may be, how obvious its intention, or how pure the motive in which it originates, we may count ourselves happy if it passes without censure or suspicion from some quarter or other, when even Mary the sister of Lazarus cannot anoint the head of her great and adorable benefactor, but there is a Judas to rail at her extravagance, and others of the disciples to sympathize with his indignation at the waste.

St. John, indeed, in his account of the transaction, speaks of Judas only as the murmurer; but that the feeling was not

confined to his thievish heart—that he was only the foremost and the loudest in giving expression to a sentiment in which others of them concurred—is pretty clear from the statement in the chapter before us, where the evangelist says, that “when his *disciples* saw it, they had indignation.” St. Mark also says, “there were *some* that had indignation within themselves.”\* The reproof, too, with which our Lord silenced their animadversions, was evidently addressed not to one, but to several. Now, that *Judas* should affect a benevolent indignation was only natural and characteristic; but that any other of the disciples should have felt displacency, was, perhaps, scarcely to have been expected. One would have thought that simple reverence for their Great Master would have led them to admire and applaud such an act of homage to His person; and that the more costly the offering, the heartier would be their approval. What! could they really think the ointment wasted, when poured upon the head of Him whom they themselves recognized as God’s Anointed? Or did they so little appreciate His greatness and goodness, that, when one who did feel them came and gave this affecting testimony of her reverence and love, their only sentiment was one of indignation at her profusion? They knew, too, who the woman was. They needed no one to tell them that she was Mary, the sister of Lazarus; they knew the love that Jesus had for all that favored family, especially for her who sat such an eager listener at His feet; they knew also how doubly He had endeared Himself to her by the wonderful mercy He had so recently shown her in raising her brother from the grave; and there, too, was Lazarus at the table with them, the living memorial of His marvellous kindness. Was it possible, then, that when Mary, in some feeble expression of her unutterable gratitude, came and poured the ointment on His gracious head, they should have so little consideration either for her or for their Master, that they could only condemn it as a wasteful extravagance? “To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment

\* Mark xiv. 4.

might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." No! let us not be unjust towards the disciples. In Judas, this was merely the hypocritical expression of disappointed rapacity. "This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag;" from which he would have rejoiced in the opportunity of embezzling to such an amount. Not so with the other disciples. No bad or sordid feeling mingled with their censure; nor probably would the thought of it have occurred to them at all, but for the suggestion of the traitor. They knew the benevolence of their Master's heart, and how considerate He was for the wants and distresses of others; they knew how little He cared even for the comforts, still less for the luxuries, of life; and they thought, therefore, that Judas's observation was only reasonable and right, and that Mary would have acted far more in accordance with the spirit and example of Jesus Himself, whose whole life was a ministry of mercy to the poor, had the precious balsam been sold and the money distributed as Judas had suggested. They thought that they understood their Master better than she did, and that they were only entering into His feelings and anticipating His judgment, in thus condemning as extravagance what she meant as devotion.

And plausible enough their reasoning may at first sight seem. Three hundred denarii would have comforted and cheered many a poor destitute heart; whereas, here, they were suddenly dissipated in a momentary act of homage. Yes; but there is often a lamentable lack of wisdom in these narrow calculations of obvious and immediate utility. Had Mary acted as the disciples would have had her act, had she sold the ointment and distributed the money among the poor, some would no doubt have been directly benefitted at the time; but thousands upon thousands, in all succeeding ages, would have lost immeasurably more than the objects of her charity would have gained. For how many thousand hearts have been opened by the touching narrative before us! How many thousand thousand times three hundred

pence have been given to the poor as the genuine consequence of this act of devotion? The odour of her ointment filled the house; but the odour of her love has filled the world, and multiplied its fragrance by spreading its inspiration.

Had she, indeed, in humble imitation of her Lord's beneficence, sold the spikenard and given the produce to the poor, she would doubtless have done that which would have been acceptable to Him; but she would not have satisfied the instincts and urgencies of her own heart. To do good to others for His sake, would seem a very different thing in her eyes from doing homage to Himself, when she had such an opportunity of rendering it. And it is to *Himself personally*, to Himself, her great and heavenly Benefactor, the unction of whose ineffable wisdom and grace had filled her soul with gladness, that the instinct of her new heart impels her. She reasons not about consequences; she can enter into no cold calculations of comparative utility; she thinks only of Him; she *can* think only of Him while He is there, and she can do Him reverence; and to Him, therefore, she goes, with the costliest offering in her power, and pours out upon His head the precious spikenard—say, rather, pours out upon Him her heart, her heart all melted with its own fervors.

And in this light our Lord Himself regarded her conduct. "Why trouble ye the woman," He said, tenderly shielding her from the censoriousness of the disciples. More positive and immediate good she might perhaps have done had she thought and reasoned as you think and reason; but could she have more feelingly testified her gratitude and devotion? Why disturb her with your ungenerous objections, when evidently "she hath done what she could" for the emphatic expression of her love and reverence? Even were she mistaken in offering me such a tribute of affection, it were an error which you might indulgently regard. But it is far from being an error. In thus simply obeying what you consider a thoughtless and extravagant impulse, "she hath wrought a good work upon me. For the poor," upon whom you think her solicitude more wisely bestowed, "the poor ye

have always with you," and to their necessities you can always minister, "but me ye have not alway." My absence you will soon be called to lament; and, indeed, the time of my departure is so near at hand, that I may almost look upon myself as already dead; and upon this act of hers, in pouring the ointment on my body, as the anointing of it for my burial. Ah! There is more, far more, in such a genuine, earnest act of love, however unnecessary and extravagant it may seem, than you have any conception of; and "verily, I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world," and throughout the whole world it shall be preached, "there shall also this, which this woman hath done"—this simple, touching act of devotion to me—be everlastingly spoken of in its touching connexion with my sufferings and death.

"In that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial." Not, however, that our Lord meant that she was *aware* of His approaching death, and that she acted thus in ceremonial preparation of His body for interment: but only that *in effect* it was such a preparation, and in the event would be seen to be so. It would be going too far to understand our Lord's language in this strict and literal sense. Some, it is true, there are, who put this construction upon it, and represent her as deliberately acting with this specific intention. "Yes," says a divine of deserved celebrity, "this day is already in the reckoning of Mary's faith, the day of His burial. Her grief anticipates the hour of mourning. She sees the sacrifice already offered; the victim lies before her; she sees it already pierced, bleeding, dead! She pays to this Jesus, yet living and speaking to her, the funeral honours which she had reserved for His lifeless remains. So lively is her faith; so much has her grief outstripped time; so deeply has she entered into the thought and purpose of Jesus Christ."\* But surely, this is going too far. This is allowing the imagination to run away with the judgment. It is falling into the very common error

\* Vinet, in his discourse on "Le Vase de Parfums."

of attributing to the disciples a clearness of intelligence, and an amount of knowledge, which, at this period, they were very far from possessing. Love, no doubt, is apprehensive and far-sighted. The heart often sees much further than the head. But nothing is more clear than, that, notwithstanding our Lord's express and repeated declarations that He was to suffer and to die, and to rise from the dead the third day, His disciples did not understand Him. None of them were able to receive these sayings. True, His language was sufficiently intelligible ; but how—if He was really to be crucified and slain—how was He to be the Redeemer of Israel? In their view the two things were totally incompatible ; and that He could really mean what He said, seemed to them, therefore, impossible. In this respect there was nothing to distinguish Mary from the rest. His apprehension and death came upon them all alike with a sudden and overwhelming surprise, fatal to every hope they had cherished respecting Him. It was not, then, in the *anticipation of faith* that she acted as she did : it was not because she was aware that His hour was almost come ; but simply because she *loved*, and was zealous to do all she could to do Him honor. It was her love, eagerly embracing an opportunity of expressing itself, and thus *unconsciously doing a far more beautiful thing than she had any thought of doing*. “She did it for my burial.”—And from this it is, as it strikes me, that our Lord's vindication of her derives its peculiar force and instructiveness. There was a certain solemn propriety in the act, totally unintentional on her part : but *because it was done with the simple desire to do Him honor, He graciously accredits her with the whole of it*. There was a goodness and a beauty in the deed which she herself had never designed ; but because of the sanctity of the motive from which she acted, He accepts it just as if she had been aware of all that was to happen to Him, and had anointed his body in distinct anticipation of His burial. And upon precisely the same principle does He represent Himself as acting in the day of judgment. “Then shall the King say unto them on his

right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee ? or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in ? or naked, and clothed thee ? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, *ye have done it unto me !*" They had no thought that they were ministering to Him, when ministering to the wants and sorrows of the afflicted ; but because of the love to Him by which they were actuated, He accredits them with a beneficence they never designed, and astonishes them by discovering the mighty amount of goodness that may be involved in one simple act of genuine Christian love ; and how far, how infinitely far it reaches, even from earth to heaven, from the prisoner in his dungeon, up to Christ upon His throne !

" In that she hath poured this ointment on my body, *she did it for my burial.*" Such, then, is the gracious principle upon which He acts towards every one that loves Him. And what stronger encouragement could He possibly have given us to the exercise of Christian love and beneficence ? Let but the thing be done heartily and earnestly from simple love to Him, and He graciously accredits the doer of it, not merely with the good which was designed to be its immediate effect, but with *all the beneficent results that follow in the long train of its consequences.* A good work wrought for Christ does not die away in the doing of it. It lives on. It lives on in its influence on other minds. It lives on in every good thought and feeling, and desire, which directly, or indirectly, it may be the means of exciting. It lives on from generation to generation, with unspent energy and with immortal life ;



and the doer of it lives *in* it, acting still, and like Abel, "being dead, yet speaketh." And thus Mary is pouring out her ointment still, in constant endless stream ; and ever, as it still flows on, it wins for her the Master's blessing. "*She did it for my burial ;*" and so, to the very last result, He will accredit her with all !

Ah, and it is an awful consideration, that the like immortality attaches to the *evil* that we do. Even though it should not corrupt others, it makes the doer worse. It tends to strengthen and inveterate his depravity. But sin begets sin ; and that too with a power incalculably prolific. "Dead works," as the apostle calls them, from the result in which they naturally issue, are instinct with terrible, with inextinguishable life : life that works by multiplying death. Evil words, evil deeds, evil example, have all their own necessary and pernicious influences ; and in these influences the man himself lives on a posthumous life, acting where he is not, acting ages after death, and in the eye of God connected with them even to their very last results : connected with them, aye, and inculcated in them too. A terrible consideration for every man ! A terrible thought, but an incontrovertible truth. Just as in a good work wrought upon Christ, or for Christ, there is involved an amount of beneficence absolutely immeasurable, and known only to Him who sees it all ; so in the doings of an evil man, in the disastrous efficacy of his example and influence, there is an amount of criminality which eternity alone can declare, but in the whole of which he is implicated ; and not more certainly in the evil which he has consciously committed, than in that of which he has been unintentionally the cause. How many a man ought this consideration to bring to a pause ! How many a man ought it to prostrate at the foot of the Cross, to lay hold there of the means which God has mercifully provided for the expiation of our guilt, and to seek there that new heart, and that right spirit, which will lead him to labor as zealously for Christ, as he has hitherto lived recklessly against Him.

But looking again at the text, let us endeavor to enter practically into the spirit of this gracious declaration, and to derive from it that stimulus to loving activity for the honor of Christ, which it is designed and adapted to impart. "For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial." *In doing what she could, she did far more than she thought of doing, and Jesus accredited her with it all.* This is the moral we are anxious to impress.

All of us, then, can do something. However limited our means or ability, all of us can do something ; and if the love of Christ be in our hearts, something we cannot but do. Inactive and indifferent we cannot be. To Himself—except as He graciously identifies Himself with all who need help, comfort, advice, instruction—to Himself personally, we can do nothing. But there are those whom He condescends to call His brethren, and to whom He points us as His representatives ; and a good work done unto them, He regards as a good work wrought upon Himself. In the very humblest effort—honestly and heartily made for His sake—to befriend the destitute, to solace the wretched, to reclaim the vicious, to strengthen the feeble, to instruct the ignorant—believe it ! there is a virtue and a value with which we indeed can never plume ourselves, but which He, nevertheless, will generously acknowledge to the glory of His grace. Only do what you can, and you will do far more than you think of. Comfort but one heart, lead but one sinner to the Cross, reclaim but one lost sheep or lamb, instruct but one poor child believingly to name the name of Jesus, teach but one of these little ones that he has a Saviour in Christ and a Father in God, and you know not what you may be doing. You know not how many you may be benefitting in benefitting one. Eternity alone can tell you, and then you will stand astonished at the result. Your loving efforts will have an immortal operation and imperishable consequences ; and with them all, you will be graciously identified by Him, who sees the end in the beginning, and the effect in the cause. The poor, the thoughtless, the ignorant, the afflicted, you

have always with you, and He has set them before you as representatives of Himself. Let, then, the love of Him who loved us ; let the death of Him who died for us ; let the life of Him who ever liveth for us ; let these constrain you, and you cannot be inactive. Something you will do ; and you will do it heartily and earnestly, as unto God, and not as unto men.

Standing, too, as we do on the threshold of another year when the past, with its grave reflections, and the future with its unknown possibilities, are both pressing upon the soul these considerations seem to come with peculiar solemnity. Another year ! And so much more of life is gone, and so much less remains ! So much less of ability, and influence and gracious opportunity—that precious balsam, of which though bought for us at such a price, we are for the most part so unmindful. How much, indeed, has been indolently suffered to evaporate or run to waste ! How much has been wantonly lavished on objects, far other, alas, than those which Christian love selects ! And how scanty the little that may now remain ! Whatever the residue, to Thee, O Saviour, be it all devoted ! Though but a drop be left, Thou in Thy benignity, wilt not repulse the penitential love that offers even that.

*Milverton Church,*  
LEAMINGTON.

J. H. SMITH, M.A.

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its WIDEST truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

### SECTION FIFTH.—Acts i. 15—26.

"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity ; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem ; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein : and his bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots ; and the lot fell upon Matthias ; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."—Acts i. 15—26.

SUBJECT :—*The First Ecclesiastical Meeting for Business.*

THIS paragraph chronicles the *First Meeting* of the Christian Church ever held for the transaction of mere business. The meeting was held "in those days," i.e., in

some period between the ascension of Christ and the day Pentecost. Probably it took place on the very eve of the ever-memorable day, when "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind," &c., &c. The verses direct our attention especially to the *nature* and *order* of the business transacted at this First Ecclesiastic Meeting.

I. THE NATURE OF THE BUSINESS. Three things may be predicated concerning this business.

First: *It was a business of very grave importance.* The business was nothing less than the *election* of an apostle—the election of one to fill the post which Judas desecrated and deserted. One, to use the language of Peter, who should "*be a witness with us of his resurrection.*" The resurrection of Christ is the key-stone of the Christian system; it presupposes His life and death, and demonstrates the Divinity of His nature and His message. Hence it was evermore the salient and constant theme in apostolic preaching. Of all the important men in the world, none so important as those who could bear witness to this fact from their own personal observation and knowledge. To be able to do so, constituted an apostle. The fact was so extraordinary in its nature, and clashed so mightily with the popular prejudices, that no one of that age would be qualified with the necessary heroism to proclaim it, who had not been deeply convinced of it by the irresistible evidence of his own senses. Hence the first Christian propagandists were apostles—witnesses of Christ's resurrection. To appoint one of these was the business of this meeting.

Secondly: *It was a business in which the assembled Church had a duty to fulfil.* A hundred and twenty, we are told, were assembled on this occasion. Whether *names* here is synonymous with persons, or merely implies the registration of an organization, or whether the hundred and twenty is used as a sacred number, or to designate a definite multitude, an indefinite crowd, are questions that have been raised and discussed with very different results. We see no reason

object to the authorized version in this case, and we take the words, therefore, as they stand—conveying the idea that there were a hundred and twenty individuals present. Probably this number comprehended all the disciples of Christ in and about Jerusalem. Now each individual in this multitude, male and female, had their duty to fulfil in this meeting. They were called on to exercise their best judgment, and to give their conscientious vote in the election of candidates. The candidates were set up, mark you, not merely by the existing apostles, but by the whole body of the disciples assembled. The appointment of ministers is not the right of an individual, however distinguished in Church or state, nor of a community of ministers, but of the assembled Church.

Thirdly : *It was a business which the assembled Church was competent to discharge, irrespectively of external society.* All the power for business was in the room that contained these hundred and twenty. They sought no counsel from any body of men external to themselves, nor would they have received any dictation from any person or society outside, however dignified their authority. The power of a Church for its own business is in itself, or rather in its Head. It is the organ of Christ's will. The movements of a true Church are the evolutions of Christ's mind.

II. THE ORDER OF THE BUSINESS. The order seems to be as follows :—

First : *Peter's address.* “ Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples.”—Peter!—He had once grievously fallen : but having truly repented of his heinous offence, and been restored to the apostolate in the most solemn manner by Christ, when he dined with Him on the Galilean shore after His resurrection—is here, with renewed and heightened zeal, the leader of the chosen race. With his wonted boldness he stands up in the midst of the disciples, and begins his speech. His speech contains—(1) A solemn sketch of the miserable man who had once occupied the vacant post. He

reminds them of Judas's crime. The description of the fearful delinquency is remarkably mild. He speaks of Judas as *a guide to them that took Jesus*; referring, undoubtedly, the course which the betrayer took in the garden of Gethsemane. (John xviii. 2—23.) Probably, Peter's memory of his own fall was too vivid to allow him to express himself in harsher terms of Judas. He saw, however, in the betrayal of Judas, the fulfilment or illustration of an old scripture: "*This scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas*" The passage to which Peter refers is generally supposed to be that recorded in Psalm xli. 9. We believe this to be a mistake, though it is expressly applied to Judas by our Saviour:—"He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." (John xiii. 18.) The Psalm referred to is that quoted in the 20th verse:—"For it is written in the Book of Psalms." (Psalm lxix. 25, cix. 8.) Peter, in quoting the Psalms, assumes that they were well known to his auditor and avows that they were the utterances of the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David. He does not say that any scripture predicting such a fall as Judas, must needs be fulfilled, but that the scripture predicting the ruin of such a sinner must be accomplished. Punishment *must needs* follow crime.

He reminds them of the office which Judas once held "*He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of the ministry*;" i.e., he helped with us to make up that significant and sacred number, twelve, which is now broken and must be restored. The ministry referred to was that of the apostleship. He then proceeds to describe his terrible end: "*Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and his bowels gushed out.*" Matthew says, "the chief priests bought with the money the potter's field, to bury strangers in." There is no contradiction, inasmuch as in the Scripture a man is said to do that which he causes or occasions to be done. (Gen. xlii. 38; Rom. xiv. 15.) Judas was the means of the field being bought; he furnished the money. "*Fal*

ing headlong." Matthew says, "he hanged himself." There is no contradiction here either. Matthew merely relates the act of suicide. Peter, in his speech—or, if you will, Luke, in his history—states what occurred to the suspended body; that it fell down and was dashed to pieces. Striking retribution this, that the very plot of ground which he bought with the price of blood, was to be strewn with his mangled frame, and dyed with his gore. Physically, he went to his own place. The accursed body fell on an accursed spot.

The terrible end of this Judas was a notorious fact. "*And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.*" The fact that the body of the betrayer was dashed to pieces on the spot which he had purchased with the money for which he had sold the Son of God to an excruciating death, had a significance so terrible as to give it a wide circulation, and make the spot memorable for ever. "*It is Aceldama,*" a word composed of two Syro-Chaldaic words, and means literally "The field of blood." His speech is made up—(2) Of counsel as to their present duty. "*Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*" In his direction he indicates two things. (1) The work to which the man is to be appointed;—it is to be a witness to us of His resurrection. (2) The class from which he is to be appointed;—he is to be selected from "these men which have companied with us," &c. Probably Peter refers to the seventy disciples. (Luke x. 1, 2.) These seventy, Christ Himself had dispatched on a missionary tour at a very early stage of His public ministry, soon after His baptism by John. Peter's principle was this:—That the new apostle should be elected from the number of those who were most intimate with the Son of God, their Great Master; a principle this, that ought ever to be observed. He only is qualified for the highest office in the Church whose alliance with Christ is the most



cordial and intimate. "*Of those men,*" &c. Yes ; of the men, and only of those.

The other point in the order to be observed is—

Secondly : *The nomination of two from which the choice was to be made.* "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. The word "appointed," must be regarded as meaning mere setting up as candidates ; and in this we think the voice of the whole Church assembled was taken. Two of the best men were selected from amongst the number who were considered the most eligible for such a momentous office. There seems to have been perfect unanimity in the nomination of these two candidates. But why two rather than any larger number? Probably the claims of those two above all the rest were so distinguishing as to confine them to that number.

The other point in the order to be observed is—

Thirdly : *The united prayer to heaven for direction.* After the nomination you have this prayer :—"Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen." This prayer implies (1) A recognition of Divine omniscience. "Thou knowest the hearts of all men ;" a deep impression of God's acquaintance with all hearts is essential to sincere and earnest devotion. The prayer implies : (2) A desire to have their choice regulated by the Divine—"show whether of these two thou hast chosen." As if they had said, "Thy choice shall be ours, we desire only to vote for him whom thou hast ordained for this office. Thy will be done." This is the spirit of all true prayer.

The other point in order to be observed is—

Fourthly : *The casting of lots and the election of Matthias.* "And they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. Two questions start for discussion here. (1) What were the lots? The expression "they gave forth their lots," does not mean the same as the expression, "They gave forth their votes ;" the lot was something more than a vote, it was an old

method of reaching a decision. According to Grotius, they proceeded thus:—"They put their lots into two urns, one of which contained the names of Joseph and Matthias, and the other a blank, and the word apostle. In drawing these out of the urns, the blank came up with the name of Joseph, and the lot on which was written the word Apostle came up with the name of Matthias. Thus their decision was reached and their prayer answered. The use of the lot is elsewhere spoken of in the Scriptures (Josh. xviii. 1—10. 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42. Prov. xvi. 33, xviii. 18." \* Another question started is: (2) Who gave the lots? Did the whole assembly, the hundred and twenty, or did the eleven apostles only? There is no way of reaching a certainty on this point; although our impression is, that the whole were engaged in it. Christianity recognises the individual, and demands his agency in all that concerns its interests.

Thus ends the meeting. Matthias is elected to take the place of Judas, and complete the apostolic circle. Twelve was a venerated number. As the number of the sons of Jacob, the tribes of Israel, were twelve, Jesus had chosen twelve. These disciples felt that they were not complete without this magic *twelve*, and for this they held this church-meeting, and gained their object by counsel, prayer, and lots. Though Judas is gone, his place is filled, and the apostolite number is complete.



# Gems of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*Soul Concentration.*

"This one thing I do."—Phil. iii. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Thirty-fifth.

**T**WO thoughts are urged upon our attention in context. First : *That genuine religion is connected the most earnest activity of soul.* The grace of heaven makes one holy, irrespective of his own powers, nor does it supersede the necessity of *fervid* action. Holy principles are dropped into the mind, as seed into the soil, that they grow independent of the mind's agency. But they can be the result, under God, of deep and serious thinking upon the truths of Holy Writ. A holy character is not a something that comes to a man from without, but that which is produced from the workings of his powers within. And this activity is not the lazy activity of the formalist, or the drone, but the activity of a soul on fire. The activity of the competitor in the Olympic race-course, with every power on the full stretch, intensely anxious to be the first at the goal and win the prize, is the figure which is employed in the context to represent the activity of genuine religion. "I press," says Paul, "towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." "I press," just as the Great Race is to be first to lay hold of the pole or post which marks the goal, and thus win the prize. Identify not, I entreat you, genuine religion with a lounging, sleepy life, or with a formal and mechanical kind of activity. A genuinely religious soul is a soul in the highest earnestness, with every power on the stretch. God saves man by earnest work, a earnest work.

The other thought which the context urges on us is—  
 Secondly: *That this earnest activity is directed by a dominant purpose of soul.* “This one thing I do.” The one master-purpose of Paul’s soul was moral perfection of character. His grand object was to know Christ thoroughly, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, to be made conformable unto His death, and to attain to a perfect resurrection of being. This, as yet, he says, he had not reached—“not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect,” &c. The master-passion of his soul was desire of the prize of perfection, the crown of holiness. The subject of the text is *soul-concentration*. “This one thing I do.” We shall notice the nature and importance of soul-concentration.

I THE NATURE OF SOUL-CONCENTRATION. What is meant by it? In order to guard against misconceptions, it may be necessary to mention some of the things which are not included in it.

First: *It does not mean absorption of soul in mere pious exercises.* A withdrawal from the world, a retirement into the depths of solitude—there, in devout and mystic quietism, to meditate and pray, analyze our emotions, register our frames and our feelings, and become the victims of self-consciousness—are habits of life foreign to true soul-concentration. Paul, who worked at his trade, studied the questions of his age, mingled with his contemporaries, played a most active part in the drama of his time, and felt an interest in everything that concerned his race, could not have meant anything like this monkish isolation from the world.

Secondly: *It does not mean a disregard to any of the lawful engagements and innocent amusements of life.* Theologians have done what the Bible has never done—divided the field of man’s activity into two departments, the *secular* and the *spiritual*: giving the idea that man is to be spiritual here, and secular there, whereas in all things he should be spiritual. The secular and the spiritual in man’s history here are as

vitality connected as body and soul, and as the body obedient to the volitions of the mind, the secular should be made to subserve the interests of the spiritual. Religion should be business, and business, religion. In the market in the workshop, in the senate-house, and in every department of activity, man is as truly bound to worship God as he is in the temple. Striking a bargain is as solemn a thing as singing a psalm. The whole of life should be a walk with God. Nor does it mean that we are to disregard innocent amusements. God has filled the world with elements for gratification. He has given all that is delicious in taste, sweet in odour, beautiful in form, melodious in sound. Who contemns these wonderful provisions of God, is irreligious.

Thirdly : *It does not mean the engrossment of the soul in the idea of its own happiness.* There is a religion which absorbs the soul in the one great wish and struggle for heaven. Every wish, every effort, every prayer, is for own happiness : it is intensified selfishness. Paul did not mean by the "one thing" his own salvation, his own happiness. Not he. No man was more self-oblivious than he ; no man made greater sacrifices for others than he. Who said, " I would that I were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," could not have meant by the " one thing" his individual happiness.

What, then, is meant by the "one thing?" It means, in plain word—obedience to the will of that God whom he loves supremely, as manifested especially in the mission of that Jesus whom he had consecrated his entire being. The first question he asked when the true religion seized his spirit, was, " What wilt thou have me to do ?" His grand desire ever afterwards was, " whether he lived to live unto the Lord ; or died to die unto the Lord ; whether living or dying, to be the Lord's Love to his Lord and Master was the dominant passion of his soul, the all-controlling power of his activities.

This one thing—obedience to the Divine will—admits of great variety of action. Nay, this unity of soul ensures diversity of labor. The controlling disposition of a man

gives its character to everything he does. The man who has the artistic inspiration looks at everything artistically; the philosophic spirit treats all things philosophically; the mercenary spirit touches all things with a sordid hand. He who has the true religious spirit does everything religiously; whatever he does, whether he eat or drink, he does all to the glory of God.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUL-CONCENTRATION. First: *It is essential to force of character.* Mind is like light, air, water. Diffused, it is comparatively powerless; compressed, it is mighty. Condense the rays of the sun and they would burn the world; compress the air, and it shall rend the mountains. Steam, spread through the atmosphere, is powerless—condense it, and it shall drive the fleets of nations through the billows. It shall drag towns on the railway, swift as the winds. So with the powers of the mind. Distracted and diffused they are forceless; concentrated, they shall work with a Lutheran or a Pauline energy. There are three states in which we find mind in this world. (1) *Unconcentrated.* There are thousands of souls, in every neighbourhood throughout the world, who have no one definite object to engross their heart; their mental powers are not bound up to any purpose; they are divided and are powerless, and at the mercy of circumstances. There is an awful waste of soul in this world. Soul-energy is going off like steam in the air. (2) *Wrongly concentrated.* There are minds here set upon inferior objects—minds that give themselves up entirely to some one inferior thing—business, politics, literature, science. Minds set even upon such inferior objects get power. The man who sets his mind entirely on business becomes wealthy; or on science—makes brilliant discoveries. It is seldom, perhaps, that a man fails to obtain the object on which he concentrates his entire powers. He moves on like the river to the ocean; its very obstructions lend it an opportunity to increase its momentum. (3) *Rightly concentrated.* Such is the concentration which Paul displays; his

soul was concentrated on Christ, and to do His will was His "one thing." This is the concentration to give power. The mind set on God is in vital connexion with Omnipotence, and becomes mighty through God.

Secondly : *It is essential to peace of mind.* The mind that is divided among many objects can never be harmonious. It is oscillating between different points. Peace of mind requires that all the faculties and affections of the soul flow in one channel towards one object, and that that object be in agreement with our dictates of right and our highest aspirations. God alone is such an object. Conscience will approve concentration on no other object but Him, and He alone equal to the highest aspirations of our nature. Only the soul that makes God the centre of its affections, the study of His thoughts, the law of its activities, is happy. They have perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Him.

In conclusion—this subject furnishes us with three things.

First : *With a test of character.* What is our one object? What is the one thing with us? The thing that takes up most of our thought, heart and time. If God is not the great object of the heart's affections, the great subject of the mind's thoughts, the great law of life's activities, we are destitute of the true religion.

Secondly : *The value of Christianity.* Our hearts are naturally divided; the subjects of contrary impulses and influences. What can unite them? Nothing but the revelation of God in the Gospel is adapted to do so; as a fact, nothing else has ever done so. This is the power for the purpose. It is the power to gather up, reconcile, unite in harmonious operation, all the divided forces of our nature. The subject furnishes—

Thirdly : *An explanation for practical evils.* Want of power is an evil. Professors of religion are everywhere complaining of their weakness; the lack of strength for this office of duty. The cause of this moral feebleness is the schism of soul, the want of concentration. Want of peace is an evil. What restless dissatisfaction there is even

amongst the avowed disciples of Christ. There is a fickle, restless, unhappy state of soul. The cause of this is—division of heart. God alone can so centralize these divided souls of ours as to give them *power* and *peace*.

Brothers, this unity of soul is the great want. We live in an age fraught with influences to divide and distract the heart. The pressing duties of business, the growing attraction of literature and art, the fascinations of popular amusements, the engrossing character of the public questions that are springing up in increased number every day, all tend to distract the soul and turn it aside from the one great Object. Our constant prayer should be—"Unite our hearts to fear Thy name." Our constant resolution should be—"This one thing I do."



SUBJECT :—*In what does Man's Death as a Sinner consist ?*

"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 17

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Thirty-sixth.

**N**O subject is more familiar to us than death. It meets us in every walk we take, in every circle we enter, in every book we read. The dark thought of it is pressed on our attention every day. We move evermore under its shadow. It sets our whole life in the minor key. The Bible teems with references to it. Every sermon rings out its doleful echoes. It gives a sadness to our religious services, and even to our festive hours. But though we are thus familiar with it, our conceptions of its essence may not always be either distinct or accurate. To the question, What is death? the common answer, perhaps, would be, The dissolution of the body; the returning of the organized dust back to its elements. But this reply, though it may be sufficient to describe the death of irrational creatures, is manifestly inadequate fully to express the death of man as a sinner. Man's death



as a sinner is something more than the returning of his body to dust, and the departure of his soul to eternity. The death threatened to him, as the consequence of his sin, in the Bible, and the death which he has been dying ever since the fall, is something more than this—something far more solemn, and more terrible. And the subject to which I wish to call attention is ;—*That man's death as a sinner consists in something more than the dissolution of his body and the departure of his soul to eternity.* Very numerous are the considerations which might be brought in support of this position. I must confine myself entirely at present to the suggestions furnished in the text.

I. THE EMPHASIS EXPRESSED IN THE TEXT. "Thou shalt surely die." The passage is regarded by most acknowledged Biblical critics as very emphatic,—*"Thou shalt surely die."* or, as it reads literally, *"dying thou shalt die."* The language gives to me rather the idea of *intensity* than certainty. It seems to me to mean this :—Thy death, man, in case thou sinnest, shall indeed be death ; shall be a far more terrible thing than the death of those creatures that thou seest expiring around thee. Two thoughts illustrate this.

First : *Death, as a dissolution, may be a natural event.* Death seems to be a natural law of all organized bodies, both vegetable and animal. "All flesh is grass." Dust, whatever forms of beauty, strength, or majesty it may take, is destined to go back to dust again. This death of dissolution is evidently the original and constitutional law of all corporeal existence. Death is as much a natural part of the world as birth and growth. God created whole races of creatures, such as the eagle, the vulture, the lion, and the tiger, to live on the life of other creatures, and only on their life. Their very existence demands death. Death is the condition of their life. And even the creatures that live on vegetables and water—since every blade of grass teems with existence, and every drop of water is a universe of life—require death for their existence. In truth, the ox grazing in the meadow, the sheep

feeding on the hill-side, on the mountain crag, and even the songsters of the grove quenching their thirst with the morning dew, destroy more life than those carnivorous creatures which, like the lion and the tiger, live on flesh alone. Geology shows that this system of things prevailed long ages before man was created. The strata of the earth, formed unnumbered ages before man was called into being, are crowded with the cemeteries of generations of creatures that have long ceased to exist. As all organized existences, therefore, ever have died, and such dissolution seems the condition of life throughout the whole system of things, it may not be unreasonable to infer that this dissolution would have taken place in man even had he not sinned. It may be said, granting that man constitutionally has this tendency to dissolution, would not the Creator have everlastingly counteracted this tendency in his case had he not sinned? With Him all things are possible.

Secondly : *Sin gives this dissolution its terrible significance.* If thou sinnest, dying thou shalt die ; thy death shall be an awful reality. What are the things that sin has brought to death that give it this alarming significance? (1) There is *terrible mysteriousness*. There is something in mystery, when it is connected with those subjects in which we have a vital interest, more or less distressing. The mysterious change in the conduct of a friend ; the mysterious heavings of a vessel when at sea ; the mysterious sounds that fall on the ear of the traveller on a strange road at night ; all are more or less distressing. It is thus with death. To us it is a great mystery. The sensations connected with the last hour, and the issues of the event, are all folded in deepest mystery. Though millions have passed through it, not one has returned to explain to their survivors. Every man must enter the dark cloud himself, and penetrate the mystery alone. Now, had man not sinned, it would not, we trow, have been thus. Every man might have had an intuitive knowledge of the event ; his path through it, and the scenes beyond it, might have been clear and attractive to his vision.

(2) *Physical sufferings.* As a rule the dissolution of man's sinner is connected with great pain. It is true that men die without suffering, pass away without a pang, but this is an exception. We all think of death in connexion with strange sufferings. Now, had there been no sin, such sufferings would not have existed. Death would have been to man only as a beautiful sleep—as the laying aside of an earthly and worn-out vesture, for a spiritual and an eternal one.

*Mental frustration.* Few things are more painful to us than the frustration of a cherished purpose, the wreck of a project on which we had set our hearts. Life to us, indeed, is precious in proportion to the purposes which we have at heart.

Sin gives death the power to break these. Few men, if they die, die who have wrought out all the cherished purposes of their souls. They leave their works unfinished. The shores of every man's life are strewn with the wrecks of cherished plans. Death is also a sore distress. Now, had there been no sin, it would have been so. Dissolution would not have come until man felt that he had finished all he had to do, or wished to do on this earth. As the merchant, having realized his commercial plans, withdraws from the hum of the city and the bustle of trade to a mansion surrounded by nature in its loveliest aspects—man, in death, would have left this world for a higher scene.

(4) *Social disruptions.* Here we are linked together by social ties. Where there is a marriage, two souls, the twain are one. The mother lives in her sweet bond of love and the inspiration of a father in his toilings is drawn from love to those he calls his own. There are others for whom we would die. Now sin gives dissolution the power to violate all these attachments, to rupture all these tender ties. The thought of the babe she leaves behind, gives an agony to the mother on her dying couch. To leave the world we love on earth, and go alone to the grave and to eternity, this is a distress. Had man not sinned, his death might have been thus. (5) *Moral forebodings.* There are many suspicions that are awfully painful in connexion with death. One suspicion is, that there may not be any future existence.

that death is the eternal end ; and the other is, that should there be a future life, it may be an existence of darkness and misery without end. These suspicions are connected with sin. Had there been no sin, man would have had no doubt whatever, not only as to a future life, but as to a future life of blessedness. He would have known that to die was to enter into a higher life of unending blessedness. Now, if such things as these are brought by sin into connexion with man's dissolution, we can appreciate in some measure the emphasis of the text—*dying, thou shalt die* ; thy death shall be a terrible reality.

Another suggestion furnished by the text, which goes to show that man's death as a sinner consists, either in something more than dissolution of his body, or the departure of his soul to eternity, is—

II. THE TIME SPECIFIED IN THE TEXT. "In the day." There is no authority whatever for taking "the day" in a figurative sense. There is nothing whatever metaphoric in the language. "The day" means literally the day. Now, if the death meant mere dissolution of the body, or the departure of the soul, God did not fulfil His word. Adam did eat of the forbidden fruit, and in the sense of dissolution he did not die. He lived to the age of eight hundred years. He became the father of a numerous family, the head of an immense and ever-multiplying race. Had death here meant mere dissolution, and had the Divine threat been fulfilled on the commission of the sin, there never would have been but one man. It would have been a fact that he lived, that he sinned, that he died, and that would have been the sum of all human history. To hold that death here means mere dissolution of the body, is to imply that God disregarded His own word in this case ; for Adam did sin, and he died not on that day. But if you take the word "death" as meaning a speciality—a something over and above dissolution, some elements that the sin would bring to it, giving it a new significance and a terrible reality—then the fact harmonizes with

the truth of God. Adam did die the day he sinned. Such a change took place, not merely in his physical condition but in his mind and heart—so much remorse and foreboding, so many dark thoughts about his dissolution—that he died; his innocency died, his hopes died, his peace died. The word “death,” then, I take, when used in connexion with sinful men, as meaning not merely physical dissolution, but meaning *curse, misery, wretchedness, &c.* Thus we might read, as one remarks, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely be *cursed.*” “By one man sin entered into the world, and the *curse* by sin,” &c. This view of the subject serves several important purposes.

First : *Serves to reconcile science and revelation on the subject.* Science shows that death reigned in the world before man was created; that man, by the constitution of his nature is doomed to dissolution; and that, therefore, if death mean merely physical death, it is not true that death came as the consequence of sin, and thus revelation is contradicted which teaches that “as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” But take the word “death” as meaning, when applied to the sinner, all that we have said as associated with it—as meaning, in one word, “*curse*”—and science and revelation are one on the subject. This view serves—

Secondly : *To explain many ambiguous passages.* Such, for instance, as “the wages of sin is death.” If death mean only physical dissolution, the wages are both inadequate and, generally, very tardily paid. Again :—“To be carnal minded is death.” All ungodly men are carnally minded and there is not physical death in that state of mind. Again :—We read that “Christ hath abolished death,” &c. Now if death, in these cases, means physical dissolution there is scarcely truth in it, for that goes on. Men die regularly since His advent, eighteen centuries ago, as they did before. Death is as great a conqueror as ever. But if it mean *curse, or misery*, then it is true that Christ hath destroyed and abolished all that in the experience

His disciples. The fear is removed, the sting is gone. This view serves to show—

Thirdly : *The value of the Gospel.* The Gospel takes away from those that receive it, all that is terrible in physical dissolution. It not only assures its disciples that death is not the end of existence, but only a transition in its mode, and that there is a future life of blessedness, but it gives the delightful assurance that that future blessedness is for them. Hence they come to hail death as a friend, rather than dread him as an enemy. They know that when "the earthly house is dissolved," &c. They feel, as Milton has it, that then death will only be

"A gentle wafting to immortal life."



#### SUBJECT :—*Spiritual Beauty.*

"The beauty of the Lord."—Psalm xc. 17.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Thirty-seventh.

THE beauty here referred to is not the beauty of God in Himself, but the beauty of God in and upon His people. It resembles the beauty of the starry sky reflected in the placid lake, the beauty of the sun mirrored in the dew-drops of the morning, the beauty of the rainbow on the dark ground of the sky, the beauty of the moon clothed in the mild splendor of the sun. It is "the beauty of the Lord our God upon us."

I. This beauty is **VARIED**. It is the beauty of faith as seen in Abraham, the beauty of patience as seen in Job, the beauty of purity as seen in Joseph, the beauty of meekness as seen in Moses, the beauty of boldness as seen in Elijah, the beauty of thankfulness as seen in David, the beauty of faithfulness as seen in Daniel, the beauty of earnestness as seen in Paul, the beauty of love as seen in John, the beauty

of them all as seen in Jesus. This beauty, therefore, is many tinted, richly varied.

II. This beauty is GROWING. Its growth is like the growth of corn: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear;—it is like the growth of trees, first the seedling, then the young tree fenced round, then the large tree fully developed, with its beautiful arch reflecting perfectly the great arch of the majestic sky overhead. It resembles the progress of light; first the twilight, then the silver dawn gradually growing into the golden splendors of noon. Faith, humility, patience, gentleness, meekness, love, are some of the features of this beauty; and these, in the mode Christian, shine like the sun “with growing brightness.”

III. This beauty is UNFADING. Earthly beauty grows until it reaches full bloom, and then it begins to fade. But not so with the beauty of God. It grows brighter and brighter for ever and ever. Just as the sun sets in hues more golden than those in which he rises, so the man who leaves the world, with the beauty of God upon him, leaves it lovelier than when he first entered it. For that beauty is ever growing and never fading. It is a beauty that shall defy all the ravages of time, care, disease, and death. Time cannot wrinkle its wrinkles; care cannot plough its furrows; disease cannot impress its marks upon any of the features of this beauty; death cannot breathe upon its fadeless bloom.

IV. This beauty is ATTRACTING. Josephus informs us that the babe, Moses, was so remarkable for beauty, that “happened frequently that those that met him, as he was carried along the road, were obliged to turn again upon seeing the child; that they left what they were about and stood still a great while to look on him.” Thus the perfect beauty of childhood is attracting, and in this it is a lovely symbol of spiritual beauty. The beauty of God upon the primitive Church drew the eyes of the heathen toward her, and forced

from them the exclamation, "Behold these Christians, how they love one another." The beauty of God upon the disciples caused the people around to wonder, and take "knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." The beauty of God upon Peter and the rest, attracted to "the king of beauty," three thousand souls on the day of Pentecost. The beauty of God upon the members of the Church, has been drawing and assimilating men of all tribes and all ages. And in proportion as her members have this beauty upon them, are they successful in making others lovely. Our daily prayer therefore, should be, "God be merciful unto us and bless us ; and cause his face to shine upon us ; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the beauty of the Lord, our God, be upon us : and establish thou the work of our hands upon us ; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it."

V. This beauty is UNCONSCIOUS. Whilst salvation to the believing sinner is generally a reality of consciousness, the beauty that results from salvation, when perfect, may be designated an unconscious beauty. The soul of man, invested with the beauty of God in perfection, is unconscious both of the existence of that beauty and the admiration it excites in the minds of those who gaze upon it. A dutiful daughter, let us suppose, watches by the bedside of her dying mother. She anticipates her every wish, meets her every want ; she serves her by day and by night, till the fire has left her eye, and the bloom gone from her cheek. She would not take a throne, and leave her sick mother. How beautiful she is, but she does not know it. She is too absorbed, too beautiful, to be conscious either of its existence, or the admiration it excites in those who behold it. So it is with spiritual beauty. It is said that Moses, when he came down from the mount of communion, "*wist not* that his face shone." And we have in Matthew's description of the last judgment a revelation, on the one hand of unconscious spiritual deformity, and a manifestation, on the other, of unconscious spiritual beauty.



"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee ? or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in ? or naked, and clothed thee ? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Thus, their lives were beautiful, their faces shining in the eyes of Christ, when they were all unconscious of it. Thus, like the beauty of stars and rainbows, and flowers, and birds, and children, the beauty of God upon us, not in crescent fragments, but in full-orbed splendor, is invariably unconscious, until revealed to us by those who gaze upon it.

VI. This beauty is RARE. It is rare as a few flowers amid a garden of weeds ; rare as a few pebbles gleaming up out of an ocean of sand ; rare as a few star clusters shining on the dark breast of night. It is rare and yet free, rare and yet attainable. Oh, it is wonderful that this beauty should be so uncommon when it is so free ! It is universally attainable, for "it is unto all and upon all them that believe." Fellowship immortal ! "only believe," and you shall have the soul and face of an angel, you shall have a spirit and a countenance beaming with intelligence, beaming with purity, beaming with love, and beaming with joy.

JOHN DUNLAP.



:—*The Good Man's Present and Future House.*

now that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were have a building of God, an house not made with hands, heaven. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be with our house which is from heaven : if so be that being all not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle are burdened : not for that we would be unclothed, but that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he hath us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. v. 1—5.

sis of Family the Six Hundred and Thirty-eight.

is it for Christians sometimes, to survey their present and their future habitation. The survey is from becoming weary in well-doing, and even more diligent in their labor of love ; yea, it is to lift them up under troubles, raise them above the temporal things, and fill their minds while living with the most joyful and glorious anticipations.

GOOD MAN'S PRESENT HOUSE. *It is his physical* The mind occupies the body. Holy Writ often calls the body as the soul's residence. "How much longer shall they dwell in *houses* of clay, whose foundation is in dust, which are crushed before the moth ?" when the keepers of the *house* shall tremble, and the men shall bow themselves, and the grinders shall be few, and those that look out of the windows shall be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets. These figurative expressions in these passages refer to the human frame.

It is *earthly*. It is formed from the earth, and the spirit, its tenant, dwells on the earth. From turning to the earth, we see that it is composed of material. By the inclination we feel to the senses, we perceive that our body draws our spirit to the material objects. "And the Lord God formed

man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul." "My soul cleaveth unto the dust : quicken thou me according to thy word."

*This house is moveable.* To a tabernacle it is compared. A tent is moveable, temporary, and can be easily taken down. For these reasons the body is so designated. How quickly it can be removed ! What a little while it lasts ! O, the ease with which it may be wholly laid aside ! "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance ; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

*This house is decaying.* "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The term "dissolve," means properly to dis-unite the parts of anything. As applied to a building, it denotes throwing down or destroying. When used, as here, in reference to the body, it signifies the dissolution of the body in the grave. The human frame gradually grows old, decomposes, and returns to earth.

*This house is exposed.* It is situated in a locality where it is liable to the ravages of time, the rough use of long and wearisome toils, the injurious effects of sinful indulgences, the assaults of the wicked, the fierce winds of disease, the sudden and destructive shocks of accidents, and the spoiling hand of death. Indeed, such is its exposure, that wonder is that it can stand in any instance for seventy or eighty years.

*This house is inconvenient.* "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." How much of our attention it requires in order to ensure its preservation ! What a continual demand does it make on our energies for its daily support ! "All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled." It needs daily cleansing, daily repairs, and daily protection. Then what

trouble it gives us when out of repair! How exceedingly distressed we are on its being struck by any distemper, casualty, or destruction! Who that thinks of its wants and liabilities can help feeling that it is burdensome. Something it is always wanting. For it we have never done working. Often is it giving us extreme anxiety, putting us to considerable expense, or causing us severe pain.

*This house is inferior.* Paul desired a *better*, that is, a suitable habitation. He longed for the period when his vile body should be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. This desire was less or more experienced by the saints of old. Nor would any of them be satisfied till the corruptible should have put on incorruption, and the mortal should have given place to immortality. Yes; and no person who shall obtain a good hope of dwelling in a far superior residence to that which he now occupies, will be wishful to stay in his present abode, but be solicitous to inhabit the future one. "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

II. THE GOOD MAN'S FUTURE HOUSE. *The saint's future building will be the resurrection body.* "We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The redeemed soul's final domicile will be the clay tenement in its changed and beautified condition. You have an exquisite description of it in the fifteenth chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. It is there shown that the natural, weak, corruptible, and dishonored body deposited in the tomb, shall be raised a spiritual, strong, incorruptible, and glorified body. The godly man's future dwelling will be the very opposite of his present one. Doubtless it will be in every respect more in keeping with his views and feelings, and more thoroughly adapted to his immortal spirit.

*The saint's future building will be super-human.* It is a "building of God, a house not made with hands." Jehovah will be the architect of this future abode. Assuredly,

it will be not at all reared by human hands, but be wholly constructed by the Great Master-Builder. Though built by the Almighty, the Christian's present house has much about it which is temporary, frail, and easily removed, as made by the hands of man. His future one will be permanent, fixed, and undecaying, as if erected by the Lord. The former, although raised by the everlasting Creator, has much about it which partakes of the construction of a feeble creature. It decays as if it had been the work of some poor mortal, instead of the immutable Being. The latter, which shall be framed thoroughly by the Highest, will be durable and glorious, and consequently more in harmony with the unchangeableness and excellence of our adorable Maker.

*The saint's future building will be eternal.* "We have the building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The body the believer shall ultimately have will be immortal. It will never be taken down by death; but will live on for ever and ever. Never shall it crumble to dust as the present one does. While time leaves its traces on the body which now is, eternity will leave no trace on that body which shall be. No; it will endure through endless ages in all its original stability and beauty. It will know no decay and no dilapidation. Not a change will ever pass upon it calculated to weaken its strength, to efface its stateliness. Its power and loveliness will alike perpetual.

*The saint's future building will be unexposed.* Its site is to be "in the heavens." Ever will it abide within the gates of the celestial city. It is not to be situated on the earth, but in heaven; not in a changing, decaying world, but in an ever bright and beautiful country. In the heavens there will be no hurtful lusts to weaken and efface it; no business calculated to mar its strength and beauty; no changes act upon it to its injury; no rueful blasts of disease impair it; no earthquakes of Divine wrath to shake its foundation; no thief to break in to plunder it of its treasures; no destroyer to throw it into ruins. It shall be placed

where all will contribute to its constant preservation and increasing adornment.

*The saint's future building is attractive.* "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." Paul craved the spiritual body or house. "I have," he said, "a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." While at home in the body, he knew that he was absent from the Lord. When absent from the body and in his spiritual building, he felt that he should be in his Lord's immediate presence. Similar was the feeling of the believers of his day. Nor do saints in our day feel otherwise. Hence the godly in every age have, like the apostle, longed for the "house not made with hands."

*The saint's future building he is prepared for.* "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God." Jehovah pardons and accepts the saints, and enlightens and renovates their nature, and thus renders their souls meet for their respective future glorified bodies. Their justification and sanctification—the requisite preparation—the Almighty effects on the ground of Christ's expiatory sacrifice; and by bringing them to rest solely on Jesus, the atoning Lamb, for His justifying and sanctifying grace. Everyone that wishes to possess the building of God, must be meetened for it; and there is no way of securing the necessary meetness but by penitentially and believingly yielding himself up to the Father through Jesus Christ.

*The saint's future building he has the assurance of.* "Who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." God gives the believer the pledge that it shall be his. He sends forth the Holy Ghost to witness with the believer's spirit, that he shall finally have the better body. This, the sacred Spirit does in various ways, chiefly by giving the Christian a sense of the Divine favor, and by enabling him to behave in such a manner as to show to himself and to others that he has undoubtedly become an heir to the heavenly inheritance, a part of which is the soul's future spiritual body or building.

*Finally, have you such a house in prospect ?* If not, never rest until you have. At any moment your clay tenement may be taken down ; then, if you have not a building of God, your soul will be found naked. Wherefore comply with the dictates of God's Word and Spirit, and at once look to the Saviour with contrition and in faith, and He will yet redeem your spirit from all sin, and your body from the loathsome grave. Amen.

J. S.

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## Biblical Criticism.

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### THE CODEX SINAITICUS OF PROFESSOR TISCHENDORF.

It is impossible to over-rate the importance of ancient manuscripts of the New Testament. It is from them that our existing printed copies were derived ; it is by means of them that our readings are either verified or corrected. We suppose the reader to be in possession of the general facts connected with the subject. Hitherto we have known four great manuscripts of the New Testament, written in uncial, or capital letters, and of great antiquity. These are:—(1) The Alexandrine, which is called Codex A, which is ascribed to the fifth century, and is in the Library of the British Museum :—(2) the Vatican, Codex B, written in the fourth century, and now in the Vatican Library, at Rome :—(3) the Codex Ephraemi, Codex C, which was probably executed in the fifth or sixth century, and is in the Imperial Library, at Paris. It is a palimpsest, that is, the original writing has been as far possible removed, to make way for certain treatises of Ephrem the Syrian. And there are numerous chasms :—(4) The Codex Bezae, Codex D, probably written in the sixth century, and now in the Library of the University of Cambridge. It contains only the Gospels and the Acts. There are many other uncial manuscripts, as the Claromontanus, the Basiliensis, and the like ; but those mentioned above were

until lately regarded as the four of peerless value and importance. Now, however, Tischendorf has given a fifth to the world, which will probably rank with the first four. This he calls the Codex Sinaiticus, and distinguishes it by the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *Codex א*. It is considered by Tischendorf to be as ancient as the fourth century, and is written on vellum, the skin of antelope or ass. Tischendorf gives the following account of his discovery of this manuscript:—

In 1844, Tischendorf found a portion of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament in a basket of papers at the convent of St. Catharine, on Mount Sinai. These he rescued from the flames to which they were destined. Endeavoring however to get the rest from the monks, his over-anxiety roused their suspicions; and on their hearing from him the probable antiquity of the writing, they refused to give him any more. He again visited the monastery in 1853, but could hear nothing about the treasure. However, in 1859 he was there again; and being now under the protection of the Emperor of Russia, the monks showed him and permitted him to copy the whole, which was now found to comprise a large portion of the Septuagint, the New Testament entire, the Epistle of Barnabas in Greek, and a large portion of the Shepherd of Hermas.

In the year following, Tischendorf took the manuscript, which he had borrowed from the monks, to Leipzig, where he prepared an edition of it for presentation to the Emperor. Of this larger edition, in four volumes folio, only three hundred copies were issued. Of these, two hundred were appropriated by the Russian Emperor. The others were sold by Tischendorf at £34 10s. per copy. The paper is substantial and fine, the ink and type are made to represent the original. One of the four volumes contains the Dedication, Prolegomena, Notes on the Text, and twenty-one *fac simile* plates. This has recently been followed by a cheaper edition, in ordinary Greek type, and containing only the New Testament, and Barnabas, and Hermas. For this edition the Prolegomena have been somewhat revised, and there is one



*fac simile* of the writing from Heb. xii. 27 to xiii. 25. Even this smaller edition is sufficiently handsome, and is calculated for the ordinary purposes of the student of the New Testament.

We propose to give in our next some account of Constantine Simonides, and the remarkable claims he has set up in relation to the Codex Sinaiticus ; afterwards to speak more particularly of the manuscript itself, and the reasons adduced by critics for believing in its antiquity ; and, finally, to give an account of its more interesting and important variations from the Received Text of the New Testament.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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STUDENTS of Theology, whether at college or in private, often waste time and energy for want of guidance. Unacquainted with the true method of study, and having but vague notions of the very science they are in pursuit of, they wander without satisfaction, and sometimes consume years in labor, much of which is needless, before finding the right path. If theology, like the mathematics, or the natural sciences, were in principles and results, for the most part a matter of general agreement and recognition, as definite and ascertained, and there were an abundance of trustworthy text-books suited to every grade of advancement, the business would be comparatively easy. But this is not the case. On the contrary, although truth on this subject, as on every other, is but one,

there is a great diversity of opinion. Vagueness prevails to a large extent, and many even of those who hold the truth, do it from want of definite principles and scientific method, in a confused manner, and with various mixtures of error, to the great detriment of themselves and their disciples. Hence it is often found very difficult to make real progress, or even a right beginning in this study. Long experience in reading, and much painful reflection, are the conditions of attaining a ripe and independent judgment, able to sift the wheat from the chaff, and to make solid acquisition. The writer can speak feelingly on this subject, having himself suffered from the present unsatisfactory state of theological learning. He will be happy if a plain and concise statement of the results of his experience be found profitable to beginners, saving unnecessary trouble and perplexity, by putting them at once on the right track.

A difficulty which besets the student at the very threshold, is the question whether theology itself is possible and legitimate, or not. Sometimes he is long haunted by misgiving, which damps his ardor and diminishes his vigor. Or, he may adopt the negative opinion, and suppose himself to have cast away theology, though he is all the while theologizing after a fashion. We earnestly counsel him to face this preliminary question boldly and warily. Until it is settled, he can do nothing well. If theology should turn out to be a dream or a crime, let him abandon the pursuit for ever; if a lawful and necessary reality, he will have the satisfaction of proceeding with unimpeded vigor.

Some amongst men of letters and men of science, and some who are members of the secular professions, or are otherwise engaged in active life, are in the habit of alluding to theology with a but half-disguised contempt. In their estimation, evidently, it is a relic of by-gone ages, and is unworthy to retain hold on the vigorous leading intellects of an enlightened and practical age. It is not our present business to argue the question with these men. We are dealing now neither with the worldliness which disrelishes theology because of its

connexion with godliness, nor with intellectual infidelity but with hearty believers in Christianity.

Godly persons may still be occasionally met with, who object to theology as irreverent and dangerous. Our aim, they think, should be, not precise thought or learned inquiry but edification. They forget that no edifice can be durable but upon a firm foundation, that if this be not provided, crude and unsafe materials will inevitably be substituted; that the only possible basis of the Christian character is Christian truth, and that to ascertain this is the aim of theology.

On the other hand, we sometimes hear, even from men of some learning and ability as well as piety, loud declamation against the alleged irrelevance and mischievousness of theology. Christianity, forsooth, being an affair of the heart cannot brook scientific handling. Theology stalks abroad to stifle the life of the Christian, and reduce the corpse to an anatomical preparation. It strives authoritatively to pass on mankind the dead manufacture of the human intellect for the genuine living gift of God. It is evident that objectors of this class have much affinity with the last, though the language is more elevated and pretentious. The fact however that most of them have after all a theology of their own which they are far from reserving, seems to show that the real displeasure is rather with doctrines of a certain class, or a particular kind of theology, than with the thing altogether.

In order to settle the question whether theology is possible and legitimate or not, it is necessary to determine first, *what is meant by the word*. A clear notion of words will prevent fighting in the dark. An accurate conception of the nature of the subject, formed at the outset, and ready for continuous reference, will be the best preparation for further inquiry. This accordingly will be our aim in the next paper.

C. V



# The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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## *Epiphany.*

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem."—Matt. ii. 1.

THE Gospel is preached to the mean and the simple, but not to them only. The shepherds had the precedence, but the grandees followed them. This was a more public and notorious manifestation of Christ than the other. The world knew nothing of the shepherds and their vision, nor of what passed in the stable when they saw the Babe. But a star in the sky is hung up in the view of all. These wise men were illustrious, and their visit to Jerusalem was a public event. Well therefore is this day emphatically called *Epiphany*, that is, *Appearing* or *Manifestation*.

The *Persons* who chiefly figure in this narrative were *Gentiles*. The Law was exclusive; yet not wholly, for it allowed proselytes. The temple itself was built on the threshing-floor of a Jebusite, and the materials were brought from Tyre. But the Gospel shows its purely catholic character at the very outset. The whole world has an interest in the King of the Jews.

These persons were *Easterns*. The East is the origin of the human race, the first seat of all that is noble, of all that is base in man. There were the greatest tyrannies and the most complete freedom; there the earliest literature and science, there witchcraft and divination; there the primitive worship, and there the oldest idolatries. Though much folly had flowed thence, here is an importation of wisdom. If the Eastern springs be purified, it will sweeten the streams of the West.

These persons were *wise men*. God often draws men Himself by means of their calling :—David from the shee folds ; Simon and His fellows by draughts of fish ; the centurion (Matt. viii. 9) by notions of military discipline, at these astronomers by a star.

They were truly wise. False wisdom leads from Christ true wisdom to Him. The wisest thing which these wise men ever undertook was this journey to Jerusalem.

Think not that the stars or the stones of science will lead the wise any whither but to Him who is the Wisdom and the Word. All the beams of the firmament are rays of the original luminary ; all the lessons of nature, obscurer parts of the one grand harmony.

They were wise men, and therefore they sought wisdom "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given." The fool will not seek it, for he knows it not ; but the wise will—he has tasted, and desires more.

These wise men came from the East, in search of Christ with the purpose of worshipping Him.

See their *inducement*. *We have seen His star*. To see a star was a thing of nature ; to know that it was *His* was a gift of God.

Their *faith* ; faith in His birth and in His Kingdom. *Where is He that is born King of the Jews ?*

Their *obedience*. *We are come to worship Him*. They are truly wise who are willing to obey, though obedience involves a journey ; to encounter inconvenience, toil and danger, for the sake of reaching the Saviour and worshipping the Lord of the soul.

Their *perseverance*. First, they apply at Jerusalem, as the most likely place. The authorities there, though they could help them by information, could not lead them to the King. Then, undiscouraged at this opening failure, they proceed to Bethlehem.

Their *success*. The sign which at first prompted their journey, now becomes their guide. This fills them with joy but when they see the Child, we may well suppose their joy rises to its height.

*Their devotion. They fell down and worshipped Him.* To lead us to the worship of Christ, the stars shine in heaven, and the Bible on earth. All nature tends thither. Revelation tends thither. It is the end of all things. It was the end of their journey.

Their devotion was *discerning*; they were wise men. They were not offended at the King's meanness. Chrysostom (on Matt.) says: "His mother was not crowned with a diadem, nor lying on a golden couch; but had hardly a single garment, and that not for ornament but for covering; such as was possible for a country carpenter's wife. If they had come seeking an earthly king, they would have been confounded rather than rejoiced; since they would have undergone their laborious journey in vain. But now, since they sought a heavenly King, though they saw nothing royal about Him, yet content with the witness of the star alone, their eyes rejoiced at the sight of an insignificant boy, since the Spirit in their hearts showed Him to be venerable; therefore they fall down and worship—they see humanity, and they acknowledge God."

Their worship was twofold. (1) *Spiritual*, for their whole behaviour and speech testify their sincerity. (2) *Bodily*, *they fell down*. Man's body and spirit were both made by the Lord, and both must worship Him. Tell us not that you love your friend if you give no outward sign of pleasure at his presence, if you withhold the warm grasp of the hand, the best greeting of eye and tongue. If you are worshipping Christ, imitate these *wise men*, and fall on your knees.

Their worship, moreover, was *costly*. *They opened their treasures*. Words cost nothing; to bend the knee is easy; but to give up valuable property is a proof of sincerity. Giving, from the days of Abel to the last offertory, has been regarded as an indispensable part of Divine worship. Open then your treasures. It was *symbolical*, for their *gifts* were *gold, and frankincense, and myrrh*. Wise men have ever delighted in symbolism. The gold signified His royalty, the *frankincense* His Deity, the *myrrh* His mortal humanity.

So in our worship there is symbolism of express Divine institution, and symbolical worship is most provocative of devotion.

It is sad that the zeal of some should ever terrify others, and then lead them to hypocrisy, and at last to cruelty. So it was with Herod. At first he was *troubled*; then he betook himself to cunning: *Bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.* Finally, he devised and executed the slaughter of Bethlehem.

Let us *imitate*, not Herod in his alarm, cunning and madness, but the *wise men*. Let us learn Christ from nature and revelation. We have all had sufficient signs of His existence and His majesty to awaken our attention, and to render seeking and worshipping Him a binding duty. Let us copy their faith, obedience, perseverance and discerning devotion. We are spared long, toilsome and dangerous journeys. Christ is at hand. The search is easier, and success is as certain. We need hardly ask, "*Where is He?*" The place is evident. Let us come and worship—with our hearts, our persons, our property. Then shall we share the reward of the wise men. For our "coming" we shall be welcomed; for our "falling down" we shall be exalted; and for our "gifts" we shall be endowed with endless joy and immortality.

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### INFLUENTIAL MEDITATIONS.

"When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches."—Ps. lxi. 6.

Of all the operations of man, none is more important than that of meditation. By thought, man subordinates

the world to his use, brings the Infinite near to his soul, moulds his own character, and decides his own destiny. The text directs attention to meditation in its most influential aspect.

I. IT IS DIRECTED TO THE

## MOST INFLUENTIAL SUBJECT.

What is the subject? Not a thing, or a vast system of things, not a creature-being, or a universe of creature-being—but God Himself, the primal source, the animating spirit, the directing Lord of all. “*I meditate on thee.*”

Meditation on Him serves several important purposes.

First: *It serves to rouse the intellectual faculties to their highest effort.* The mind turned to Him in thought, feels the stirring of a new life through all its powers.

The faculties of inquiry leap into the most earnest action, the whole soul labors after the Infinite.

It serves—Secondly: *To prostrate the soul in humility.*

Fellowship with inferior objects is the garden of pride.

Communion with the great makes us feel our native littleness.

In the presence of God the soul loses its egotism, and feels its nothingness. Like Job, men have only to see *Him* in order to abhor themselves in dust and in ashes. It serves—

Thirdly: *To spiritualize all the sympathies of our nature.*

Living in the world, mingling ever with the objects of sense, girded and canopied by materialism, our sympathies get sensual and secular. But when, by thought, we bring the Infinite into our sphere,

the universe of material objects dwindles away, and our souls go forth to Him, feeling that Spirit is the all in all. It serves—Fourthly: *To assimilate the character to the perfect One.* By a law of mind, those upon whom we most dwell in thought we become most like. The constant object of thought transfigures us into its own image. Thus dwelling in thought upon God, we shall become like Him, “Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord,” &c.

## II. IT IS EMPLOYED IN A MOST INFLUENTIAL SEASON.

“*In the night watches.*” Night is pre-eminently the season for solemn thought. First: *It gives the mind an inward direction.* In the night, the world and all its attractions are buried from man, as into a sepulchre of darkness. As all outside of him is thus entombed in silence and sable, his soul becomes solemnly conscious of itself and its responsibility. Shut in within itself, it concentrates its thoughts upon the great ideas of God, and moral obligation and immortality, which are recorded there in characters plain and imperishable. Secondly: *It gives the mind a solemnity of mood.* Night is the emblem and minister of seriousness. Man, alone, in “the night-



watches," is in the best position to become serious. Hence, thoughts in the dark night have a greater power over us. A thought which heaves the whole nature with solemn emotions in the night, has often but little influence over us in the day.

"Oft in the stilly night,  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Fond mem'ry brings the light  
Of other days around me.  
The smiles, the tears of boyhood's  
years,  
The words of love then spoken,  
The eyes that shone, now dimm'd and  
gone,  
The cheerful hearts now broken !  
Thus, in the stilly night,  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Sad mem'ry brings the light  
Of other days around me.  
When I remember all  
The friends, so linked together,  
I've seen around me fall,  
Like leaves in wintry weather ;  
I feel like one who treads alone  
Some banquet hall deserted,  
Whose lights are fled, whose garland's  
dead  
And all, but he, departed !  
Thus in the stilly night,  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Sad mem'ry brings the light  
Of other days around me."

Aye, and the "stilly night," too, is the season for making thought upon God most powerful.

#### MAN'S POWERS THE GIFTS AND EMBLEMS OF GOD.

"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear ! he that formed the eye, shall he not see ?"—Ps. xciv. 9.

FROM this passage we infer—

I. THAT MAN'S POWERS ARE THE GIFTS OF GOD. *The ear and the eye* are here given

us only as *specimens* of those powers with which Heaven has endowed our nature. They are the chief organs of the soul's communication with the external world. Through them, mainly, the outward comes into us. These, the text tells us, are God's works. He "*planted*" the ear, and "*formed*" the eye. This is true of all the powers we have, both of body and of soul. What we have, He imparted to us ; all our faculties are His gifts. First : *This fact should check all tendency to pride in the man of superior endowments*. Ye men of towering genius and giant intellect, pride not yourself on your brilliant endowments. No thanks to you that you have them, they are the sovereign gift of the Creator. Be thankful for them, and use them for His service. Secondly : *This fact should check all tendency to envy in the man of inferior ability*. The man you envy on account of his superior endowments, cannot help his greatness ; and if you are inferior in power, your obligations are also less. With your smaller gifts you may be happy and even illustrious. The radiance of the glow worm in its sphere, glittering on the green leaf, is as beautiful and Divine as the beam of Jupiter on the blue etherial real. A holy child is as much

an object of admiration as a seraph of light. Do not be curious.

II. THAT MAN'S POWERS ARE THE EMBLEMS OF GOD. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? *The argument implied is, that what He has given us, He has in Himself.* The artist can only put into his production that which he has in himself. The life-form into which the skilful artist has chiselled the marble; or the blooming, breathing forms which he has thrown upon the canvas are only pictures of ideas dwelling in his own mind. We are the workmanship of God, and the powers He has given us are *emblems* of the powers that dwell in Himself. If He has given an "eye," He sees; an "ear," He hears; an intellect, He thinks; a heart, He feels; a will, He resolves, &c. The picture of a grand landscape, struck off by photography, may not be larger than your hand; still, if true, it has in it all that is in those wide-spread acres. Man is as nothing to God; still, what he has, has come from God, and is a picture of the Infinite. The dew-drop is the ocean in miniature. Let us descend for a moment to a few particulars. First: *Man has a sense of moral justice.* He

has a faculty for discerning moral distinctions, and a nature which rises in indignation against the wrong. In other words, he has a conscience. He that "planted" within us this sense of justice, is He not *just*? All the honest denunciations of humanity against the wrong, are but the feeble echoes of His eternal rectitude. Secondly: *Man has an affection for his offspring.* By a law of his nature he loves those who have derived their existence from him as the instrumental cause. His love is deep and tender, prompting toils and sacrifices without number. He that "planted" this parental love in us, has He not this fatherly affection? Could He give what He has not? The Bible is explicit on the subject; "Like as a father pitieth his children," &c., "Can a woman forget her child," &c. The deepest, mightiest, most constant stream in human life is parental love, yet all that ever has been, is, or shall be, is but a drop from the exhaustless ocean of Divine affection. Thirdly: *Man has a power of spontaneous action.* He has a consciousness of freedom. He feels that he has a sphere of action, in which he is the absolute lord, that he is the originator of his own purposes, the master of his own acts. He that "planted" in us

this power of spontaneity, is He not free? Is He not, in a sense in which we can never be, the uncontrolled and uncontrollable sovereign of His own conduct? "He does what seemeth good in His sight," &c. "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," &c. Fourthly: *Man has a sense of personality.* He feels that he is an individual distinct from all external things, and that he has an orbit of life through which nothing else rolls, nothing can roll; an orbit belonging exclusively to himself as long as he shall be; that he is, in fact, a conscious indivisible unit. He that "planted" in us this sense of personality, is He not a Person? Is He not a Being as distinct from the universe, as the architect is from the building, the engineer from the machinery, the lyrist from his harp.

In conclusion: Man! adore thy Maker. Thankfully trace all thou hast to Him, and use all thy powers in His service. Man! See and study thy Maker in thy own constitution. Thou hast more of Him in thee than all the myriad orbs that roll in splendor through the sky. Wipe from the mirror of thy being all the pollutions of sin, that, having a pure heart, thou mayest see God Himself, and be blessed for evermore.

#### THE LAURELS OF A VICTORY LIFE.

"To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it."—Rev.

THESE words were added by Christ to the Church at Pergamos. The Church at Pergamos has long ceased to exist. Pergamos itself has long been buried in the mists of ages. The words say that life is a battle, with which every man is consciously acquainted. It is a battle with the world, the flesh, and the devil; a battle with wrong of every degree, and in every age. The seventh chapter of Revelation gives a sketch of this struggle. Now, we are informed *that victory in this battle will be rewarded.* The rewards are the rewards.

I. DIVINE SUSTENTATION. "I will give to eat of the hidden manna." By the hidden manna, is meant the spiritual blessings of the manna given to Israelites in the wilderness was the type. In one sense it means—Christ. "I am the bread of life." "I am the bread that comes down from heaven," &c. First: *doctrines are bread of the intellect.* They are f

nourishment for the mental powers. Secondly: *His fellowship is bread to the heart.* Loving intercourse with Him will develop, strengthen, and gladden all the sympathies of the heart. Thirdly: *His Spirit is bread to the whole life.* To partake of His Spirit, the spirit of supreme love to God, consecration to the true and right, and universal sympathy with man, is to get that which will invigorate every faculty and fibre of our being. His Spirit is indeed the strength of humanity. It is the moral wine that gives at once the highest elevation to soul, and the strongest tone to character. "He that eateth me"—my moral spirit—"even he shall live by me."

## II. DIVINE DISTINCTION.

First: "*The sign of distinction.*" "*A white stone.*" This (1) may be a sign of *acquittal*. In the ancient Greek courts of justice, it was customary to signify the judgment pronounced upon the accused person by throwing a stone into an urn; the black stone expressed condemnation; the white, acquittal. Thus Socrates was convicted and condemned. There will be a public expression at the last day of the acquittal of those who have won the battle. This may be a sign of *qualification* (2) It

seems, that before the Levites and the priests, under the law, were allowed to minister at the altar, they were examined, in order to ascertain whether they were ceremonially clean or not. Ritualistic purity was regarded as the necessary qualification for office. Those who were found to have this qualification, had a "white stone" presented to them. He who came forth from the examination bore this sign of fitness for his sacerdotal vocation. Thus, the "white stone" here may mean that he who wins the moral battle of life, will be regarded as fit for the high services of the celestial world. (3) This may be a sign of public honor. It was customary in the Grecian games to give a "white stone" to him who had won the victory. He who held this stone was entitled to be supported at the public expense, had free access to all the festivities of the nation, and was regarded as illustrious in all great gatherings. Thus he who wins the moral battle of life, shall be publicly honored. "A crown of glory is prepared for him, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto him at that day." He will have full admission into all the honors of eternity. Secondly: *The character of the distinction.* What is the character? It is something *new*, it is a "new

name." "In the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." What is this *new* name, the knowledge of which is entirely a matter of individual consciousness with him who has it? This is it—"Sons of God. No one knows anything of this Sonship but he who is the

subject of it. Brothers, a fight this battle in which you are engaged, that you may come off victorious, and get this "manna" to nourish your being, and this "white stone," the insignia of glory, and this "new name," the secret of the Lord. Eternities of blessedness are included in these.

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### THE GREAT APOSTLE.

"If I must need glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities."—2 Cor. xi. 30.

Is it not very remarkable, that he does not boast of his miracles and success, but of his sufferings and temptations? For he says, of infirmities, by which he indicates various and manifold conflicts. For the Jews waged war against him, and the Gentiles stood ready armed to oppose his progress; false brethren contended with him, and professors laboring under disease, productive of scandal, afflicted him with sorrow. Everywhere he had to contend with tumults and confusion, both from his own countrymen and from strangers. Such were the evils with which the apostle was surrounded; and with which the Gospel was interwoven. For the evils were of such a nature, that none but traitors could escape them; the faithful must endure them, Divine grace assisting. But whether the storm of persecution raged with horrible fury, or poured its pestilential breath in cooler

accents, he still gave God the glory of his deliverance. For, as if a little spark should fall into the ocean, and being tossed with the foaming billows, should sink to the bottom, yet remain inextinguishable, and emerge with increasing splendor—such was the condition of St. Paul; he seemed sometime overwhelmed by the waves of persecution and danger; and when his ruin was humanly secured, he rose with new lustre, vanquishing his adversaries. And his victories were brilliant, and to the Church afford matter of eternal glorying. We are struck with the formidable appearance of the enemies raised against him by Satan: yet St. Paul never declined the combat; but how feeble is the resistance we make, even to the most contemptible enemy, whilst the courage of this mighty man rose in proportion to the magnitude of his dangers, and consequently the victory was the more glorious.

Nor was the enemy content with preparing merely one kind of temptation for this suffering servant of God; but he raised up

many and various evils against him. Here he engages in hard labor; there he is plunged in afflictions; now he swims in a sea of sorrow, and then is exercised with anxious cares; yonder is in alarms; by and by he becomes the butt of persecution: his life was a perpetual tempest; yet he comes off more than conqueror.

As if a soldier, single-handed, should undertake a war against the whole world, and rush into the most dense and well-marshalled ranks of the enemy, nor be diverted from his attack by clouds of arrows, the glare of brandished swords, or the death-inflicting spear. Thus St. Paul, single among the barbarians, the Gentiles, throughout the earth, and through all the distant shores, remained invincible. And as a spark falling into dry stubble or straw, suddenly converts whatever it burns into its own nature; in like manner also here invading, he allured all to the truth, rushing along like a swelling torrent, and bounding over every obstacle, sweeping all into the ocean of Christianity: or like a mighty wrestler, contending, running, vanquishing; or like a renowned soldier, bursting through ramparts, routing armies, and capturing navies. Thus he engaged in all kinds of warfare, and breathing flames of loving zeal, was so prepared that no mortal was able to contend with him. He comprehended the whole earth in one body, and with one voice he vanquished the whole. The conquest of Joshua was not so complete, for many trumpets were sounded around Jericho, and yet they only levelled the walls with the ground. But the sound of St. Paul's voice demolished the fortresses and strongholds of the devil; he disarmed the enemy in their intrenchments, and having collected a

large number of captives, and furnished them with suitable arms, he formed them into an army under his own command, and by this new-raised legion gained unfading laurels. David, with one small stone, slew Goliath. But if the noble achievements of Paul be compared with the exploit of this youth, as great a difference will appear between that of the former, and those of the latter, as between the deeds of a simple shepherd, and the victories of a conquering hero. For in this latter case, a Goliath is not laid gasping on the field, with a stroke of a stone; but the legions of hell are thrown into confusion by the sound of Paul's voice, who like a roaring lion, darted vivid flames from his burning lips, in preaching the Gospel; nor could earth and hell resist or impede his speed, as he advanced to overturn the nations. While to those he runs, with these he mingles, to others he passes over, and yonder he remains as a transient visitor; but in all with a speed that leaves the lagging breeze behind. He ruled the world as the commander of a navy: lightening those that were stranded, repairing such as were wrecked with tempest, exhorting the seamen, sitting at the helm, looking out of the fore-castle, handling the ropes, working at the oars, hauling the sails to the wind, observing the motion of the heavens, active and vigilant in all the departments, watching over the fleet, the captains, the pilots, the sails, the rigging, and the stores—being anxious to preserve others from danger.

Once more, let us view his sufferings. He endured shipwreck, to prevent the wreck of the world. A day and a night he struggled with the roaring billows of the deep with a view of drawing men from the gulf of hellish night. He was exercised

with hard labor, for the purpose of comforting those that were sinking under labor. He was scourged, that those on whom the devil had inflicted wounds might be healed. He remained in dungeons, to free those from bondage who sat in the shadow of death, and crown them with light. He was frequently in deaths, with a view of liberating others from the second death. Five times he received forty stripes, save one, for the purpose of delivering those who were chastened of the devil. Thrice he was beaten with rods, that he might reduce men to the ruling rod and golden sceptre of Jesus Christ. He was stoned, to deliver man from his rocky and adamant heart. He was in the wilderness, with a view of reclaiming lost man, and restoring him to the fold of God. He was in journeyings, for the purpose of gathering up the vagabonds and of opening to them the path of life. He was exposed to perils in cities, that he might direct lost man to the city of God. He endured hunger and thirst, to deliver sinners from the terrible famine of hell. He submitted to nakedness, with a view of covering the naked sinner with the snow-white wedding garment. He was frequently in tumults, for the purpose of gathering fallen man from the rude rabble of hell. He was scorched, that he might extinguish the fiery darts of Satan. Through a window he

was let down by the wall, that those who were wallowing in mire, might be elevated to heaven.

But it is not possible to speak of all he did and suffered, seeing that himself has not left much of it on record. But we might here speak of the accommodation of riches, of the comforts of marriage, of the advantages of citizenship, liberty, and friends, yet all these advantages he accounted as nothing, and even proceeded to hold them in contempt. He endured martyrdom not merely once, for he died daily. Thus this blessed man, in one body, and with one mind, endured such numerous and terrible sufferings, as would have daunted the heart of adamant with a soul of fire. And what all the saints passed through, he singly encountered himself; and regarding the world as one great circus, or field of combat, he enters, divested of every thing, boldly and generously sustains the united shock of earth and hell. This the legions of darkness saw, and vigorously opposed him. It was from the gloomy dungeon itself, that his glory dawned, and continued to shine with increasing lustre to the conclusion of his career. Nor did the tempest of persecution cease to roar, till like Elijah, he ascended in a chariot of fire to heaven, to receive the plaudit of his judge and the order of immortality.

CHRYSOSTOM

# Logical Notes and Queries.

## OPEN COUNCIL.

Freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The Editor uses his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be free from responsibility.]

### HOLIDAYS.

ANSWER TO QUERIST  
vol. xiii. St. Paul  
in the Galatians  
the observance of  
days, and times, and  
account some have  
the observance of holy-  
scriptural and con-  
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Mosaic law; thus sanctioning the principle of commemorating events by days. Thus there appears to be nothing irrational, or unscriptural, in the observance of days for the remembrance of the incidents of the Gospel history, or to stir us up to imitation of the holy dead. See Col. ii. 16; Rom. xiv. 6.

### HOLIDAYS.

REPLICANT. IN ANSWER TO QUERIST  
No. 17, p. 355, vol. xiii. The observance of holidays is, in the New Testament, a thing left to the conscience of each man. In its favour we have our Lord's example, who observed the Festivals of the Jews, and gave tacit consent to one of human institution (John x. 22). St. Paul teaches the true principle (Rom. iv. 5). His remarks in Gal. iv. 10, Col. ii. 16, are against those who make a compulsory obligation of what is a voluntary duty, left to every man's convictions.

### THE BEST GREEK TESTAMENT.

REPLICANT. IN ANSWER TO QUERIST  
No. 18, p. 355, vol. xiii. It is difficult to name any one commentator as the best. The palm, in this country, is contested by Alford on the one hand, and by Webster and Wilkinson on the other. Alford leaves few things unnoticed, and is remarkably free. Yet he is somewhat crotchety, and a little inclined to prolixity. W. and W. may be strongly commended for indicating delicate shades of meaning in words, and for thus turning mature scholarship to account. Yet they are, perhaps, too much fettered by system. On the whole, we advise the swimmer to throw away corks as soon as possible. We



are convinced that the best New Testament scholarship can never be made by modern commentators, but comes of study of the Book itself, with a good Concordance, the Syriac and Vulgate versions, the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint, the Apocrypha, Philo, Josephus, the early Fathers, the Antioch Commentators, and the Greek classics.

#### MAN'S NATURE.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 19, p. 355, vol. xiii. The question may be much illuminated by the consideration of the Scriptural use of the word *nature*, φύσις. St. Paul condemns things which are "contrary to nature," (Rom. i. 26), says that the Gentiles "do by nature the things of the law" (Rom. ii. 14), and appeals to the teaching of nature (I Cor. xi. 14.) Yet, on the other hand, he speaks of himself and others as "by nature the children of wrath" (Ephes. ii. 3.) In the former class of passages, he seems to refer to man's original and fundamental constitution, which may be partially discerned even in his present state; and, in the last passage, of the present deranged nature, which is as a piece of mechanism disorganised or an instrument out of tune. The former use of the word is the more proper and profound, since sin can only be spoken of in a secondary way as natural. Ecclesiastical writers often use the word as equipollent with "that which is born of the flesh" (John iii. 6,) the lower part of man, as opposed to spirit and grace. Yet the complete man, τὸ ὁλόκληρον—τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα, is, strictly and precisely, the true human nature; and sin is most emphatically a violation of nature.

CAMPBELL ON THE ATONEMENT.

[Answer postponed.]

#### THE EVIL SPIRIT IN :

1 SAM. XVIII 10

REPLICANT. In answer to No. 21, p. 355, vol. xiii. was on the morrow that spirit of God came upon & he prophesied in the mid house." Compare chap. xvi. An evil spirit under God's and by God's permission prophesying was sometimespanied with a species of man beside himself, in espoken of as *prophesying*. French version says, "co homme transporté." O God's prophets were possessed His spirit, so, by analogy, bad sense, when a man is possessed by an evil spirit, said to *prophesy*. Madr prophesying are conjoined Jer. xxix. 26. See also ix. 11, where a true predicted as mad.

#### Queries to be answered

1.—Is it Scriptural to the offspring of *ungodly* ? When children are prebaptism, is it proper to inquire the spiritual condition of rents? And are we just refusing to baptize them the result of our inquiry unsatisfactory—i. e. that rents are irreligious?

W. G. J.

2.—Was it necessary for when he offered his sacrifice, to believe in the Messiah his sacrifice typified; or simply, obeying God in the sacrifice, look to God pardon without knowing reason of God's doing so?—

3.—What proof have angels have passed their tion?—W. G. P.

## Literary Notices.

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It is to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the work to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is to praise worthless books : it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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PHILANTHROPIC LABORS OF ANDREW REED, D.D. By his SONS.  
London : Strahan & Co.

He was a man of undoubted greatness. He had but few equals among the ministers of his own persuasion. In mental and moral stature he stood head and shoulders above most. Many of his brethren, and among we heard some years ago endeavoring to damage his reputation almost pitifully small by his side. He thought as a philosopher, as a statesman, and felt as a devout philanthropist. Once we heard him preach, and that was on a public occasion, some years ago ; and we were then struck with the thorough grasp he had of his subject in hand, the simplicity of his manner, the clearness of his diction, and the soul-stirring potency of his tenderness. The emotion played upon his countenance, and trembled on his lip, made his language eloquent. He was too big for any denomination. The artificial air on which, alas, most ministers live, would not suit his lungs. Such a life as his deserved a permanent record. His friends discharged their duty with delicacy of feeling, discrimination of merit, and considerable literary ability. May these relics of a great man, like the buried bones of Elisha, touch the dead to life !

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FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH. By PROFESSOR A. GOSS, and others.  
London : Strahan & Co.

ten lectures on what are called "The Foundations of Faith." The subjects follow the order of the Apostles' Creed. This is their order :—The subjects are—What is Faith ?—Nature of God,—Sin, and consequences,—The Old Testament Dispensation of the World,—The Person of Jesus Christ,—Christ's Atonement for Sin,—Resurrection and Ascension,—The Holy Spirit and the Church,—The Doctrine of Justification by Faith,—The Future Life. These subjects, which are confessedly vital ones, are here treated by various authors, and with various degrees of ability. The variety of views gives a charm to the volume. Some of these papers are very

masterly. They display a very profound acquaintance with the nature of man, the theory of moral restoration, and the methods of the Divine government. The book as a whole is very valuable, and its advent very opportune.

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GOODWIN'S WORKS. Vol. VII. London: James Nisbet & Co.

HERE is another volume from the prolific and somewhat prosy pen of Dr. Goodwin. There are men who are, we suppose, theological authorities of the age, who see wonderful things in this author's productions, and we must, of course, believe that such things are to be found in them by the tutored initiates. We confess to a lack of that faculty which seems necessary to the discovery. We see, indeed, that which we find in almost every popular evangelical work of the day, but nothing more. Albeit, we rejoice in their republication for many reasons, and trust that the enterprising publisher will meet with a satisfactory reward.

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THE THRESHOLD OF REVELATION. By REV. W. S. LEWIS, M.A. London: Rivingtons.

THE discussions of this book are confined to the first chapter, and the first three verses of the second chapter, of Genesis. Its plan is thus described in the author's own language:—"I desire in the following pages to give a thoughtful and candid consideration to the objections in question. I would take occasion from them, that is to say, carefully to examine in the first place the portion of Holy Scripture to which they object—to examine it, as I have said, as *inspired*, and to investigate, on *this supposition*, the statements it contains. I purpose endeavoring thus to ascertain how far the statements thus found accord with this view; how far they appear worthy of that Great Author to whom this assumption in reality attributes them; how far they harmonize with those other Scriptures which we believe to have come from Him; and how far they agree, and are meant to agree, with the language of His works." The work is very original in its structure, vigorous in its thinking, practical in its bearing, and displays a large acquaintance, not only with the scheme of Revelation, but also with scientific truth.

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WORDS FROM THE GOSPELS. By CHARLES J. VAUGHAN, D.D. London and Cambridge: Macmillan & Co.

HERE is another valuable volume of discourses from the fertile brain and accomplished pen of one of the most valuable religious teachers of the age. The subjects of these discourses are:—Ignorant Prayers—Christ Eating with Sinners—Gospel Righteousness—Four Thousand Men Fed in the Wilderness—Mismanagement of Eternal Interest—the Divinity of Work—The Gradual Miracle—The Gospel Fire—The Unchangeable Words—The Offence of Christ—The Voice in the Wilderness—&c., &c. Altogether, the number of discourses is twenty-two. They

who are acquainted with the author's productions, will expect to find in this volume living and life-giving thoughts, true to Scripture and to souls; nor will they be disappointed.

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**THE PULPIT ASSISTANT.** By REV. THOMAS HANNAM. Vol. III. London: William Tegg.

There is a tendency in some quarters to disparage such works as these. In those portions of the so-called religious press which are under the management of ministers, the tendency shows itself whenever an opportunity occurs. Even the "Evangelical Magazine" cannot notice works of this kind without gratifying this propensity. A month or two ago we saw an instance of it in the notice it gave of a work of the Rev. George Brooks. It is a sad fact that many of the ministers that thus deal with such books stand most in need of pulpit help, and most slavishly use them. Amongst many instances of the kind with which we are acquainted, we are here vividly reminded of one which came in painful contact with our own experience a few months ago. It will be remembered by our readers that, some two years since, there appeared in the pages of the "Baptist Magazine" two articles on the "Homilist," whose egregious dishonesty in quotation and representation were severely condemned, even by the Newspaper Press, and whose manifest object was to degrade and injure our labors. A few months ago we were informed as to the author of those articles. As the person named was a Baptist minister who had been known to make a more slavish use of the "Homilist" than, perhaps, any man living, and had personally expressed to us the highest encomiums upon the work, we did not believe it until we wrote to him on the subject, when, alas, we found it so. Such conduct is too bad for comment. Beware of preachers who disparage pulpit helps.

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**THOMAS RAFFLES, D.D., LL.D.** A Sketch. By JAMES BALDWIN BROWN, B.A. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

This work opens with many striking thoughts of death that stir and soothe the soul at the same time, and then proceeds to sketch the history of one of the noblest men, and most eminent ministers of this age,—Dr. Raffles, whose sunny looks and right manly life helped not a little to reveal that Gospel, to whose exhibition from the pulpit he consecrated the powers of his being. We need scarcely recommend this book. The reputation of the gifted author, and his church-famed hero, will secure for it a large circulation.

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**SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.** By JAMES SPENCER, M.A., D.D. London: Religious Tract Society.

The idea of this book is good. A systematic sketch of St. Peter's life was needed. The execution of the plan is creditable to the author's

intellect and heart. The author, however, we think, lacks that profound of warm impulsiveness in his nature which alone could enable him full expound the life of such a man as Peter. A man can only reveal what has within him. A man must be a philosopher, to expound a philosopher; a poet, to expound a poet; an enthusiast, to expound an enthusiast. Peter was an enthusiast of the highest type; the author is not. Alas, we gratefully accept this work until a man of St. Peter's make comes to write his life. The *getting up* of the work is truly elegant.

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HOW YOUNG MEN MAY BECOME GREAT MEN. By ALPHA B. SNOW. London: Snow.

This little book, which we learn from the title page, is in its second edition, is far more worthy of that literary distinction than many can attain to it. The introducing "Chapter on Thoughts," is a good specimen, a sort of first-fruits of the succeeding chapters. The eight succeeding sections expatiate on those qualities of head and heart that do not fail to make a man truly great, and which, as the historic examples prove, and which our author has made to sparkle on almost every page, generally ensure success. Whilst it ought ever to be an axiom, that greatness is no synonym with greatness, we think such a little work is likely to be very useful. A free distribution of "How young men may become great men," can scarcely fail to inspire and fasten the best ambition in youthhood.

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SKETCHES FROM LIFE, WITH OCCASIONAL THOUGHTS AND POEMS. By ROBERT GEMMELL. Glasgow: Hutchison Campbell.

THESE occasional thoughts, expressed sometimes in prose and sometimes in verse, on a great variety of subjects, display a soul deep in life's experiences, strong in intellect, affluent in fancy. Scrappy and unpretending as the little work is, it abounds with noble ideas, and assures us the author could do something of a higher kind in the field of literature.

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POPERY UNMASKED. By HENRY WOODCOCK. London: Richard D. This is a popular and telling exposure of Popery. The author has brought the monster into the sunlight of truth, unmasked it, and its hideousness is revolting to all who truly look at it. SERMONS. By REV. JAMES PITT EDGAR. Edinburgh: W. P. Nimmo. Long, Simpkin, Marshall & Co. Five plain useful discourses. SEARCHING SCRIPTURE, AND ITS TEACHINGS. By A LAYMAN. London: J. Nisbet. A useful guide to Biblical study. TRUTH FREE 'MONG HEATHER; OR, IS THE BIBLE TRUE? By WILLIAM M'CAN. Long, S. W. Partridge. We see nothing in the thoughts of this book to require publication. They might as well have slept in manuscript.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Man's Cry for a Knowledge of the Supreme Law.

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"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—Acts ix. 6.

**M**AN'S cry for fellowship with God, which is deep as the profoundest instincts of the heart, and wide as the race, has engaged our attention in the previous discourse. This cry, we have seen, can only, in the nature of the case, be satisfactorily met by the manifestation of a God, *personal, benevolent, and propitious*; and such a manifestation is found nowhere but in the Bible. In this grand Old Book we find exactly that Living God which the deep heart of humanity cries out for.

The cry we now proceed to notice is for a knowledge of the *Supreme Law*. We take Saul of Tarsus, in his present attitude, as a representative of the race, asking for that which the conscience of humanity cries after—a knowledge of the Divine Will. This cry is as universal as the other; it is the breath of conscience. As it is the law of intellect to seek after wisdom, and the law of the heart to seek after beauty, it is the law of conscience to seek after the rule of duty. A deference to the Supreme Will is the law of its existence. That this cry is universal, is evident from the fact that all

generations in all ages and lands have some rules of duty and that those rules of duty are supposed to be in harmony with the Will of their God. This cry implies three things:—

First : *That the Supreme has a Will concerning us.* A natural desire for a thing, implies a belief in the existence of that thing. The feeling that God has a Will concerning us, seems to me to be independent of all reasoning, and to spring spontaneously out of our sentiment of a God. Reason supports this involuntary sentiment. The very fact that we are the creatures of an intelligent Being, conducts us irresistibly to the conclusion that He has a Will concerning our conduct. All analogy, moreover, will deepen the conviction. There is not an object, however vast or minute, brought within our observation, that does not express the Will or purpose of the Supreme Being. His Will is the regulative force of all the movements of the universe. Has He a Will concerning the movements of an atom and the activities of an insect, and no Will concerning man? I feel that He has a Will concerning me, and this feeling is beyond all argument. I defy all logic to remove the impression.

This universal cry for a knowledge of the Divine Will implies—

Secondly : *An impression that we are bound to act in harmony with that Will.* Man has the feeling of obligation, a feeling which he cannot shake off. No infidel reasoning however specious and cogent, has been able to satisfy man that it is a matter of no moment to him, whether he shall act according to the Divine Will or not. Carnality, worldliness, and crime, may render the feeling dormant for a time, but they cannot destroy it. Men feel that there is a supreme authority to which they are amenable for their conduct, and by which they should regulate their lives. Every pang of remorse, every sigh of contrition, every tear of moral regret, are the effects and evidences of the fact that man feels his obligation to obey the Will of God.

This universal cry implies—

Thirdly : *An ignorance of what that Will really is.* If i

were known, there would be no need to cry for a knowledge of it. Such an ignorance marks the history of all ages. The varied and opposing theories of morality that have been propounded by the thinking men of all ages, show the prevailing ignorance on this point. Even the most eminent of the ancient sages confessed their inability to find it out. Socrates said, "We must of necessity wait till some one from him who careth for us shall come and instruct us how we ought to behave ourselves towards God and man ;" and Plato said, that "It is necessary a lawgiver should be sent from heaven in order to instruct us."

Now the question is: Where is this knowledge to be obtained? This is the question to which we specially call attention now. Where is the knowledge of the Divine rule of life to be obtained? I do not see how we could ascertain this unless we had some understanding as to what that Will must be ; unless I had some *criteria* by which to determine, how could I know that that which is revealed to me as a Divine Will is really so or not? Are there any such *criteria*? There are three I think, at least, by which to ascertain whether any regulative principle for human conduct is really the Will of God or not.

First: *No regulative principle can be the Will of God that does not insure the harmonious development of our nature.* Analogy urges this. Material nature is harmonious. Earth-quakes, volcanos, and tempests, which are but occasional events, are only a few strong notes to make the harmony of the whole more striking. But the workings of material nature are, as we have seen, the developments of the Divine Will. Every student of nature feels that "order is Heaven's first law." Our instincts urge this ; we naturally loathe disorder, we have deep native longings for unity of life and harmony of action. Any law, therefore, submitted to us as a rule of life, which tends not to promote harmony through all the powers of our souls, could not be received by us as the expression of the Divine Will.

The Divine rule of life must insure the harmonious progress



of my being ; and whatever code comes to me in the name of God, and, when wrought out, does not lead to this, cannot be accepted by me as from Heaven.

Secondly : *No regulative principle can be in accordance with the Will of God, which, when carried out, does not lead to social harmony amongst men.* Humanity is one ; we are members one of another. The operations of these members should be such as to conduce to the well-being of each and all. A rule of life which, when carried out, would lead to the infringement of the rights of others, produce a collision of interest, and antagonism of feeling, could never be received as the Will of God. Looking upon man's social instincts and mutual dependence upon his fellow-man, no rule of life can be accepted as Divine that does not go directly against all frauds and violences in the dealings of man with man.

Thirdly : *No regulative principle can be in accordance with the Will of God, which, when carried out, does not promote the general happiness of the world.* God is good ; we feel this and all nature declares this. He being good, the great end of the universe must be happiness. The happiness of love is in making happy. Whatever rule of life, therefore, promotes not happiness, cannot be from Him.

Now, where is such a regulative principle, such a supreme law of life to be found ? In what philosophical code of morals, or in what religious system, do you find a rule of life that insures these three things ? Turn over the history of the world, and show me a regulative principle, propounded by any sage, or priest, in any age or clime, which has realized these results. Under the guiding principles which man has obtained by the deductions of his own reason—cruelty, injustice, rapine, wars, slaveries, and countless iniquities and miseries, have abounded in every form and degree.

Now we turn to the Bible, and ask, What of its grand rule ? Does it answer to these conditions ? What is it ? The whole law, says our Saviour, is contained in this :—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," &c.

Who does not see that this law secures the harmonious development of our natures ? Let supreme love to God reign, and all the powers of the soul will be brought into harmonious play, and its path will shine more and more unto the perfect day. It will advance from strength to strength, from glory to glory. Where this principle prevails, society, too, is blessed. The man who obeys it, goes about doing good ; he honors all men, he loves the brotherhood, he does justice, he loves mercy, and walks humbly with his God ; he loves his enemies, he prays for them that despitefully use him, he overcomes evil by good. Where this principle, moreover, prevails, men's object will be to promote the happiness of the world ; their prayer will be, " Let Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," " Let the people praise thee, O God ; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase," &c.

The conclusion of our subject is—That the Bible alone gives that supreme law of life for which all men cry out. Nowhere else is it to be found ; here it is, and it satisfies your reason and your conscience.

This supreme law of life, as embodied in the life of Christ, meets exactly the moral cry of the world upon this point. His life was the embodiment of this supreme law, and all must see that to live as Jesus of Nazareth lived, is to secure the harmonious development of our nature, to unite the race in the bonds of a happy brotherhood, and to promote the happiness of the universe.

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. The eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with lengthened archaeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION SIXTH.—Acts ii. 1—47.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya: Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words,” &c.—Acts ii. 1.

SUBJECT :—*The Pentecost the culminating period in the history of Redemption.*

**T**HOUGH, we cannot, with Schaff, regard this day as Pentecost as the birthday of the Church, for the Church was born centuries before this—we are bound to regard

as the grand crowning period in the development of the Divine plan of human redemption. Periods in the working out of this Divine plan of mercy mark the history of upwards of four thousand years, one period leading to another. From Adam to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to Christ, and now from the Advent of Christ to this day of Pentecost. To this last all the others pointed, and in it they are crowned with glory. Even Christ Himself, the desire of nations, in His public ministry frequently pointed to this advent of the Spirit. He taught His disciples that it was expedient for Him to depart that the Spirit might come. The mission of the Spirit was the burden of His departing discourses before His death and after His resurrection. He bade them tarry in Jerusalem until they should receive this promise of the Father. Before we direct attention to a few of the most salient features of this wonderful epoch, it may be desirable to notice the *subjects*, and the time of this *advent* of the Spirit.

Who were the *subjects*? On whom did the Spirit now descend? Did He descend upon man indiscriminately, or upon any particular class distinguished from their fellows by mere adventitious circumstances? No. He comes only to the disciples of Christ. They, who "were all with one accord in one place," were, I conceive, not merely the apostles, but the whole hundred and twenty referred to in the preceding chapter. These disciples had met together in obedience to the command of their Master; they felt His absence deeply; they earnestly looked to heaven for help; they were thoroughly united, "of one accord;" they prayed and waited for the promised Comforter, and now He came.

What is the *issue*? We are distinctly told that the day of Pentecost was fully come. The word Pentecost is Greek, signifying fiftieth. The Jews applied it to designate one of their great festivals which began on the fiftieth day after the Passover. It had a two-fold import with the Jews, physical and historical; it was, in the first place, a festival of thanksgiving for the first-fruits of the harvest. The Jews on this

spiritual natures, *filled* them with Divine thoughts and emotions. Now were realized to the experience the promise that Christ made to them. "The Spirit of truth shall testify of me, and ye also shall bear witness." (John xv. 26, 27) Again: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which is in you." (Matt. x. 20.) The Spirit now took possession of their souls, that they henceforth spoke His thoughts, and acted out His will. He filled them. They had no thoughts but His, or such as agreed with His; no feelings but such as glowed with His inspiration; no will but His. They were now the consecrated temples of the Holy Ghost, workers that were to become mighty through God.

Thirdly: His action *through* the disciples. Three things are observable concerning their speech. (1) *The speech followed their Divine inspiration.* It was not until after the Spirit had entered them, filled them, purified them with His holy fire, given them the right thoughts and feelings, that the speech came. Better be dumb, than speak out the thoughts of a soul unrenewed by the Spirit. It would be well for the race if the tongues of the unrenewed were sealed in silence. It is when the Spirit comes into us, fills us with its purifying and vivifying influence, that we want speech and we shall have it. The old dialect will not do to express the new life. "They spoke as the Spirit gave the utterance," or, as it might be rendered, "*According as the Spirit was given to them to declare.*" Each spoke with the tongue which the Spirit gave at that time, not each with all the tongues. (2) *The speech unquestionably was miraculous.* These disciples spoke of the wonderful things which the Spirit gave them, not in their vernacular, but in a language or a dialect with which before they were perfectly unacquainted. Language is a wonderful art in itself. Words are at once the necessary media by which we form and systematize our thoughts, and the arbitrary signs by which we convey them to our fellow men. Hence a new language is never attained but by long systematic, and often trying labor. The coming at once into the possession of a new language is as great a miracle as

we came into possession of a new organ or a new limb. This was the miracle now. These men got a new language at once, through which they could pour forth the Divine things that now came into their spirits. The miraculousness of the gift was felt by all that heard them, and all that heard them understood. "*Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?*" If the marginal reading is right, which reads—"when this voice was made"—instead of "*when this was noised abroad*"—the idea is not that the rumour of the people about the strange tongues attracted, in the first instance, the attention of the multitude, but the voice of the strange language of the disciples themselves first arrested the attention of the multitude. The probability is, that the strange tongues having first fallen on the ear of some of the people who were near at hand, the report of the wonder spread rapidly amongst all the classes throughout the city, and drew the multitudes together. And when they came they were *confounded*, they were *amazed*, they *marvelled*. Expressions, these, which indicate a wonder and astonishment so great as to overwhelm the mind with confusion. The cause of this wonder you have in this question:—"How hear we every man in the tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes," &c. The cause of the wonderment was here—that the "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians"—all these men of different languages, assembled from all parts of the civilized world, heard these poor Galileans speak in their tongues. The miracle, therefore, was so indubitable and so astounding, that it struck the multitude into the wildest wonder. (3) *The speech was immensely useful.* It served to impress the multitude with the Divinity of the system with

which the disciples were identified, and it enabled the disciples at once to proclaim the Gospel to the multitude assembled from every part of the world. Without the miraculous gift of tongues, the disciples would have had to spend years in obtaining such a knowledge, even of one language, as to have enabled them to preach in it, and in the natural order of things, ages would have rolled away before the Gospel could have spread beyond the boundaries of Judea. Now, through these tongues, they spoke the Gospel to representatives from all parts of the known world, and who, after the grand festival was over, would return to their countries and radiate through their own spheres the wonderful intelligence. Chrysostom has said that the different tongues pointed out as a map what land each should visit and occupy as the scene of his labors in converting the world. Our Lord prophesied that before the close of the generation in which He lived, "*This Gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,*" and Paul tells us in Romans x. 18, that the sound of the Gospel "*went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.*" This gift of tongues alone explains this world-wide diffusion of the Gospel. (4.) *The speech was profoundly religious.* This wonderful faculty of speech was given, not to declare any of the weak things of the human spirit, still less anything wicked, but to declare "*the wonderful works of God.*" Their *speech* and their *subject* were both wonderful. Heaven gave them a wonderful medium to reveal a wonderful thing. What were the works they spoke of. We rest assured that they were works connected with the redemption of the world in the mission of Christ, and the advent of the Spirit. Oh, come the day when the language which God has given man, shall, instead of being as now the vehicle of the erroneous in thought, the impure in feeling, the depraved in purpose—shall convey to men the pure thoughts, and the holiest feelings concerning the "*wonderful works of God.*"

(To be continued.)

# Gems of Thought.

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SUBJECT:—*A Voice from Eternity to the Children of Time.\**

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah lvii. 15.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Thirty-ninth.

**H**ERE is a voice from eternity. It is clear, emphatic, and full of wondrous meaning. Though the gulf of centuries rolls between us and the period when it fell on the first human ear, it sounds with unabated force, and bears truths as applicable to us as to the men of preceding times. Voices from time abound; they load the air we breathe, they din us with their echoes. But most of them are conflicting, none of them are satisfactory; they speak not out the information our deepest natures crave; they solve not the problems that distract us; they calm not the unresting sea of our thoughts. Here, in this mortal life, borne on as we are by the swelling current of advancing years, and changing our circumstances and experiences every day, we still retain a consciousness, more or less vivid, of our alliance with the immutable and everlasting.

In truth, does not that sense of change with which the flight of time so deeply impresses us, on this the dawn of another year, imply an element of immutability within us? We feel that we are moving, and that the universe is moving, because there is something fixed, deep, and ineradicable in the centre of our being. As that rock, which lifts its majestic head above the ocean, and alone remains unmoved amidst the restless waves and the passing fleets, is the only measure to the voyager of all that moves on the great world of waters,

\* This Discourse was delivered on the First Sunday of the Year.



so the sense of the immutable, which heaven has planted *in* our souls, is the standard by which alone we become *so* conscious of the mutation of our earthly life. If all *the* objects within our horizon moved with equal speed, *what* idea should we have of motion? None. Creatures of earth and change then though we be, we have still a vital *alliance* with the Eternal, and communications thence are amongst the most earnest demands of our nature. Such communications we have in the text. Here is a Voice, issuing *far* back, from the calm, settled depths of infinitude. A Voice addressed to us, the men and women of these distant restless times.

On the dawn of this New Year, let us for a few moments bid the jargon sounds of the world *avaunt*, open our ears, and listen thoughtfully and devoutly to the voice from *that* eternity, whence we came, and whither time's rushing stream is so swiftly bearing us.

I. THIS VOICE REVEALS AN EXISTENCE THAT STANDS IN  
SUBLIME CONTRAST WITH ALL THAT IS HUMAN.

First: The existence that this voice reveals stands in contrast with all that is human in respect to *duration*. It is the utterance of One that "*Inhabiteh Eternity.*" An Eternal existence. What is that? We know something of existences that had a beginning, and that have an end. The irrational tribes that teem in earth, in air, in sea, rose from the breath of God at first, and roll back to nothingness again. Their histories are streams that began there and then, flow on a little, and are exhaled for ever. We know, too, something of existences that have a beginning and will never have an end. To this class we belong. A century ago we were not. The sun shone, the earth bloomed, and our ancestors were as active as the men of this age. We were nothing to the universe, and the universe nothing to us. But we are something now, and something that shall remain for ever. We have received an existence that shall outlive the stars and run parallel with the ages of God.

But this VOICE speaks of an existence that never had a beginning, and that will never have an end ;—The Eternal One, the Uncreated, the Underived, the Undying. Who shall tell the years, the ages, the centuries, the millenniums that make up eternity ? None. No number of millenniums bear any comparison to it. Count the stars of heaven, the sands that gird the shore, the blades that cover creation with verdure, the rocks that make up the oceans of the globe, the atoms that compose the earth and all the rolling orbs of space—add all together, and let each figure in the mighty sum stand for ages. What does this amount to ? Amount to ! Amount to a sum too great for any finite intellect perhaps to grasp, yet too little to bear any comparison to eternity.

Eternity ! a circle infinite art thou ;  
Thy centre an eternal now.

Yet, though intellectually incomprehensible, the thought of it is inestimably valuable. It *furnishes us with the only satisfactory account of the origin of the universe*. Creation is but God's eternal thoughts in shape, His eternal will in action. He once existed alone, and in the infinite solitudes of His own eternity ; it was with Him to determine as to whether other beings should exist or not, and if they existed, of what kind they should be. He determined that others should exist, and His determination explains the universe ; and all true philosophy accepts the explanation. The thought of His eternity also *shows to us our incapability of pronouncing upon His ways*. During our existence here, He is working out a plan that, like Himself, never had beginning and will never have an end. How incompetent must we creatures of an hour be to pronounce a judgment upon His procedure ! “ Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God ? ” What is thine intellect to His ? What is thine experience to His ? The thought of His eternity, moreover, *enables us to give an eternal freshness to the Bible*. Being eternal, what He thought when He inspired men to write

The Book, He thinks now. The Bible is eternally true to His nature. Unlike human authors, whose minds often advance and alter as to outgrow and contradict their productions, His book is ever the revelation of Himself. "The word of the Lord abideth for ever."

Secondly : The existence that this VOICE reveals, stands in contrast with all that is human in respect to *space*. "*I dwell in the high and holy place.*" In what place does He dwell? "The heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him." The universe is large ; so large, that light—waves travel with almost incalculable velocity—is millions of miles travelling from one orb to another. Yet the space occupied by the whole creation, as compared with the space in which He dwells, is infinitely less than that filled by one single atom as compared to that taken up by all the worlds and systems of immensity. Where is He? Everywhere. His history has no date, His dwelling has no bounds. His home is as illimitable as Himself. Whither shall we go from His presence? Let the swiftest seraph fly for myriads of ages, with a speed that shall out-travel the light, and he shall be no nearer the limits of the Divine dwelling place, than when he commenced his rapid flight.

Thirdly : The existence that this VOICE reveals, stands in contrast with all that is human in respect to *character*. "Whose name is holy." "He is light, in Him is no darkness at all." "He is glorious in holiness." "There is none like unto the Lord." His holiness is essential, perfect, underived, ineffable Fountain whence all holiness from all holy beings is derived. His holiness is the beauty, majesty, glory of His being.

Fourthly : The existence that this voice reveals, stands in contrast with all that is human in respect to *station*. LOFTY ONE. Astronomy reveals to us a Creation transcending immeasurably the grasp of our faculties. Our estimate of things, seems so small, even as compared with the system to which it belongs, that, were our world to sink into extinction, its sister orbs would miss it no

Can the mighty forest would feel the loss of one falling leaf, the Atlantic the loss of a drop. It is an imperceptible mark in that sky of which our sun is the central light. But the system itself, compared with which our earth is such an inconsiderable fraction, is but an insignificant speck in that immeasurable space in which unnumbered millions pursue their eternal revolutions. But the vast discovered may be as nothing to the mighty realms of worlds yet unexplored. These worlds were not created in vain; they were formed to be inhabited. Each orb, as ours, teems with life. The great Book of Truth tells of "legions," "innumerable multitudes," "regions," "principalities and dominions" of spiritual exercises that tenant the universe of God. How great are His works! But how much greater He! He is the Lord of all. He is enthroned above all; and all, as compared with Him, is as nothing and less than nothing and vanity. The pomp of earthly magistrates, and the pageantries of earthly dominions—what are these? the ephemera that dance for an hour in the sunbeam and are gone, and for ever.

What a contrast then is the existence which this voice alludes to ours. Here is One inhabiting eternity. We live in a breath. Our life is as a shadow, and there is no abiding. Here is One who fills all space, whose sphere of action is immeasurable. We occupy but a speck on this little earth, which is itself but a mere sand grain on the vastness of universal being. Here is One whose name is Holy. We are unholy and corrupt. Our natures are stained throughout with sin. Here is One who is Lord, to whom all our plans and systems are but as dust under His feet. We are nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. Who can gaze at this contrast without feeling an overpowering sense of His greatness and man's insignificance. Oh, may we, frail tenants of an hour, commit ourselves to Him who "inhabits Eternity!" May we, the occupants of an atom on a globe beaten with the storms of trials and sorrows, seek to dwell in the secret place of the Most High; may we, who are corrupt in character, have our spirits purified by the

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cleansing influences of Christ, so as to have fellowship with Him whose name is Holy ! May we, who are as nothing spend our little life under the smiles of the "Loft, One !"

II. THIS VOICE REVEALS A PRIVILEGE OF IMMENSE VALUE TO THE GOOD. "With him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." What is the privilege ?

First : This VOICE reveals God's special *regard* for a *good man's experience*. This High and Lofty One condescends to regard with special interest those of a "contrite" and "humble" spirit. That He is too great to concern Himself with the individual affairs of men ; that He confines His attention to the universe as a whole, or to some of the most stupendous portions thereof, is a mere deistic dream unsustained by philosophy and condemned by religion. The minute and the vast—atoms floating in the air, and majestic systems rolling through immensity ;—insects on the wing and seraphs in their flight, are seen with equal eye by the God of All.

To the Eternal Infinite  
Nothing is mighty—nothing mean.  
Each glistening grain, each star of night,  
Distinct in space-pervading light  
To the All-searching Eye serene.

Yet He has a *special regard* to those who, through faith in His Son, are the subjects of a new spiritual life. His eye rests with a father's watchfulness upon the *contrite and humble* soul. He hears its sighs, He marks all the waves on the current of its being. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry."

Secondly : This VOICE reveals God's special *contact* with *good man's existence*. He not only dwells in the "High and

holy place," but "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." *Dwelling* implies a *close* intimacy. He is, by the influences of His love, nearer to the good than He is to others; near to guide, to succour, to strengthen. *Dwelling* implies not only a close intimacy but a *permanent* one. He does not come and go as an occasional sojourner; He continues as a settled resident in the soul. He is *always* with His people, in sorrow and joy, in life and death. He never forsakes them.

Thirdly: This VOICE reveals God's special *quicken*ing of a *good man's spirit*.—"To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." God comes down to the spirit, not to crush it, but to revive it, to give it a new life, to bring out by the sunshine of His presence all its dormant germs, and to make it fruitful in all good works. He gives it a life, over which circumstances, time, and death, have no power. A life that will grow amidst all the chills and changes of time, that will survive the grave and flourish in the eternal hereafter.

Such is the voice of eternity—blessed utterance! "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." On such an epoch in our history as this, we feel the need of some such a message from the Eternal and the Holy. The passing away from us of another Year, the fearful probabilities of the one now opening, the pensive memories of the past, and the strange apprehensions of the future, spread a shadow of sadness over our hearts. Our natures quiver as in a strange atmosphere. We feel that we have but just opened our eyes on the universe; a thousand scenes have passed before the eye and they are gone; a thousand voices have fallen on the ear, but they have died away. Many of our fellows have excited our sympathies and engaged our love, and they are in their graves. Men and women are falling around us now, and we are dying. The Chariot of Old Time rolls swiftly on, bearing us and our generation away from earth, but whither? Ah! Whither? We need a voice from the Eternal to

assure us of something that is real and lasting and  
Here it is.

Let the High and the Holy One, who inhabiteth  
dwell with us, and we have all we want. Our  
questions are solved, our profoundest wants are  
We have a blessed stability amidst the mutati  
unbroken peace amidst the storms, a perennial joy  
the privations, and an ever-flourishing life amidst t  
lutions of Time. The grand end of mediation was  
this dwelling of the Eternal with man. Christ asc  
high, led captivity captive, received gifts for men,  
*Lord God might dwell amongst us.*

Fellow-traveller to eternity! Here, under the grey  
of a New Year, there is one question of all-su  
urgency for thee to determine. What is it? The  
thy business, the extent of thy possessions, the r  
which thou art held by thy contemporaries? No, n  
are idle vanities compared with the one I suggest. It  
*What is thy soul-state?* Art thou *humble, contrite,*  
These states of mind are the conditions on which th  
dwells with man; and where He dwells, there is hea  
thou art proud, impenitent, irreverent—then, thou  
hast the wisdom of Solomon, the wealth of Cro  
dominion of a Alexander, thou art “without G  
being without God, thou art without true life an  
without holiness, without peace, without heaven;  
lost, a miserable exile in a wilderness, where every  
plant poisons, every moving creature stings, and ev  
mering beam of light leads astray.

O, Thou “High and Lofty One, that inhabitest  
whose name is Holy,” give us this humble,  
reverent spirit, and deign to dwell with us. Dwell  
for without Thee there is nothing real or great,  
are illusions, all sounds are hollow, all pleasures  
satisfying. Dwell with us; for as years revolve, lif  
in solemnity, and the thought of the future grow  
without Thee. Dwell with us, be our Leader in th

or we shall fall by our enemies; be our Pilot in the voyage, or we shall sink to rise no more.

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,  
The darkness thickens : Lord, with me abide ;  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O, abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away ;  
Change and decay in all around I see :  
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,  
But as Thou dwelt'st with Thy disciples, Lord—  
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,  
Come not to sojourn, but abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour,  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power ?  
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be ?  
Through cloud and sunshine, O, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless :  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting ? Where, grave, thy victory ?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

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SUBJECT :—*The Restorative and Conservative Work of Christ.*

"And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them."—Matt. xv. 29, 30.

*Analysis of Henry the Six Hundred and Fortieth.*

**O**UR Lord had now approached the culminating point of His public labors, and reached the zenith of His popularity. His fame now rung loudly on the ear of His age. There are two wrong opinions touching the passage now under notice. One is, that it is *unhistoric*, and the other is, that it is *repetitious*. The former opinion, which regards it as mythical or parabolic, is, of course, entertained only by



those who are falsely called *rationalistic* interpreters of Holy Word. The other opinion, which regards it as repetition of a fact which Matthew had before recorded (xiv. 13—21), is held by many orthodox expounders, and some plausible considerations in its favor. A comparison of them both, noticing the points of dissimilarity, will assist the reader to reach a true judgment on a question, which, at all, is of no vital moment.

As to the DISSIMILARITY between this narrative and that of Matthew xiv. 13—21, the following points are very noteworthy. (1) *The number of persons fed.* In the former miracle, the numbers fed were five thousand; the numbers here were four thousand. (2) *The quantity of food.* In the former case there were five loaves and two fishes; here we have seven loaves, and a few little fishes. (3) *The quantity of fragments gathered up.* In the former case there were twelve baskets full; in this case only seven baskets full. (4) *The time it occurred.* The first miracle was wrought on the evening of the first day, after the people were assembled; this miracle, after they had been with Him three days. (5) *The locality in which it took place.* The former miracle took place near the northern Bethsaida; it was in a desert place, on the north-eastern coast of the Galilean Sea. This miracle occurs in Decapolis. Mark says that Jesus departed from the borders of Tyre and Sidon. He came through the midst of the coast of Decapolis, that is, in the midst of those ten cities round the Sea of Galilee: the cities were south of the Sea of Galilee.\*

\* "What part of Decapolis the Lord visited is not mentioned by any of the Evangelists. Under this title were included ten cities, eight or nine of which were on the east side of Jordan, and the east, or south-east of the Sea of Galilee. It is spoken of by Josephus as a well-known territorial designation, embracing towns and villages. After Syria had been conquered by the Romans, ten cities seem, on some grounds, well-known, to have been placed under certain municipal arrangements and brought directly under the Roman rule. It is probable that the population was chiefly heathen. The names of the ten cities are differently given. To the original ten cities others were probably added, though at the same time do they seem to have constituted a distinct province."—ANDREW

*preceding and succeeding events are different.* The occurred immediately after John the Baptist's disciples told Him of their master's death. This took place : had granted the request of the Syro-Phœnician and retired from her coast. The former miracle *ended* by His going forth from the mountain, which ascended to pray, to walk on the sea and rescue His from the perils of the storm. This is *succeeded* by contest which he had with the Pharisees and Saddu-Galilee. (7) *The subjects of the miracle were*

Those composing the first multitude were those cities along the western shore of the lake. Those *second* assembled from the mountains on the eastern *side* expression in this passage, "They glorified the *Israel*," indicated that part of the multitude gathered then, and glorified Jehovah in contrast with their *enemies*.

striking points of dissimilarity preclude almost the *possibility* of regarding the two narratives as records of the *same* event. Looking at the passage with a practical intent, *it* is regarded as furnishing a striking illustration of *restorative* and conservative work of Christ.

**RESTORATIVE WORK OF CHRIST.** This is revealed *in* the work which He now effected in the blind, the dumb, the *deaf* and many others. He seems on this occasion to *relieve* *all*, whatever their affliction. His *physical* work is the *symbol* of His *spiritual*. Christ came to bear the evils that afflict humanity. He is a *complete* *restorer* of *body* and *soul*. The passage illustrates,

**THE CONSERVATIVE WORK OF CHRIST.** He not only *relieves* all the evils that afflict men, but He grants them *nourishment* and sustain them. Having *cured*, He *feeds*; *and* what He *redeems*. This twofold work the afflicted *human* world requires in a Redeemer.

SUBJECT :—*Christian Expediency.*

"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means *save* some."—I Cor. ix. 22.

*Analysis of Romily the Six Hundred and Forty-first.*

**I**N this verse there are two things presented : the object sought—the means used. My wish is to direct attention to the second only.

We often talk of toleration ; but do we often act it ? True toleration is St. Paul's principle, "to be all things to all men ;" not servility, not flattery, not the inability to say "no," but to take men as they are, as they are in body, mind, soul, in creed, circumstances, and life ; to take them on their own, or, at least, common ground, and so deal with them in argument, advice, help, and sermons.—Thus we should deal—

**I. WITH THE INNER CIRCLE OF CHRISTIANS.** This there always has been and always must be ; thus there were to ancient creeds, mysteries ; to ancient philosophers, esoteric truths. So our Lord had His special disciples, while the rest were *oi ἔξω*, those without. So it is in modern churches, always an inner circle, who submit themselves to signs of special membership ; as to particular signs indeed, and above all, as to the strictness of applying them in *particular cases*, we have doubts ; but the principle itself is valid.

My wish, however, is not to say much of this class. The pastor feels and knows that he has a close connexion with these ; and, in most cases, St. Paul's principle will be acted upon. As a shepherd, the true pastor will tend his sheep, helping each and dealing with each according to his wants ; ever remembering the real object of all ministrations, to save some, he will, if he is wise, be all things to all men ; but the principle must be carried farther, and thus we should deal—

**II. WITH MEMBERS OF THE OUTWARD CHURCH.** In the

bed Church, I mean those, who, having been baptized  
e of them confirmed, habitually neglect the Holy  
ion of the Lord's Supper, and do not, with all their  
eek to be conformed to the image of the Invisible.  
onformist communities, I mean those, who, while  
: chapel, paying pew-rents, and often helping in  
nd the like, are yet not members strictly so called.  
t follows, I may seem to speak strongly, at all events  
that I want to speak plainly.

class, I fear we have not so fully, as we ought,  
t St. Paul's principle ; to these, we have in a way  
selves ascetic, reserved. My thoughts turn specially  
lasses, or sub-classes I should call them—

There are in England many young men, who, from  
d, school practice, or hereditary character, are fond  
ld-sports and out-door games. Our ancestors  
d this spirit : witness the old butts. Nationally—  
rticular—we are encouraging it now. In educa-  
ries, physical training is rising into repute. The  
survives, and, if I mistake not, will survive.

ot we ministers, as a body, kept ourselves too much  
these games ? Have we not, either by silence and  
in many cases openly and positively condemned  
is, by our absence, leaving ground (*per se*, I contend)  
legitimate, to influences impure and illegitimate ?  
boisterousness—often, I admit, tinged with these  
luences—we have drawn too unfavorable conclu-  
t the general character of these young men them-  
speak strongly, because I have been with such  
a, and have, on the one hand, sorrowed, that, with  
heartedness, honesty, vigor, they were not decided  
aiming at the pure standard of Christ ; and on the  
l, have been startled by hearing them talk of holy  
h more seriousness and sense than many members  
er circle. Nay, I have been led to infer, that, with  
sious action, many a one might, out of these, have  
, who has hitherto been repelled by sweeping

condemnation of athletic sports by rigid views, sweeping assertions ; or by signs of membership too ~~xx~~ and precise. This is an attempt to put "new wine in bottles"—words of our Lord, ever seeming to warn *us* to bind on young disciples too heavy a burden. But—

Secondly : There is in England now a very numerous of young men philosophically inclined, who talk about being priest-ridden—about not being tied to apron-strings and so on. Of course it is easy to answer, that if they not tied to the strings of Mother-Church, they will be those of the Westminster, or Mr. Newman, or the *National Reformer*. But it seems to me that this is not St. Paul's way of dealing with them. His principle was to take such on their own ground, to show them that faith in Christ was the true explanation of all right but imperfect fragments of human faith. This he did with the Athenians, with Jews with all. So we must do. In the pulpit we must not ignore their state of mind, or they will not come and listen. In private we must not attempt to put them down by sarcasm or contempt, or any form of benign superiority ; else will their language certainly be, "*Ne sis patruus mihi*," in English, "We're not babies." But let us manfully and humanly deal with their doubts and difficulties. Secondly, nonsense it may seem to us ; but, if we mind not, it is fatally, sense to them. We must argue on common ground, assuming nothing *they* doubt or deny, excommunicating nothing, fulminating nothing. Let pulpit, Bible class, private talk, young men's associations, nay, all our agencies, do something for these. These are but short hints ; and we come to deal—

III. WITH THOSE WHO ARE ALTOGETHER OUTSIDE. The ~~dr~~ What are we to do with the openly unorthodox, the infidel, the heretic. We must meet these, we must argue with them *as men*. No wholesale condemnation, no *odium theologicum*, no pillory of opinion. If our faith is a faith of our *whole* selves, body, *mind*, and soul, we can, we ought to deal

on common grounds; not shirking the truth but proving not assuming what they deny *in toto*, nor allowing them assume what we deny. If English Christianity is to sustain itself, it must be English—bold, straightforward, willing to deal as honest Englishmen deal in trade, politics, all else. We must be all things to all men; with these then we must discuss the points in dispute from their side as well as ours; on common ground, from common points.

I wished specially to mention “the poor:” but I find that my words are now more than I intended. I shall, therefore, refer them to a separate paper, only adding, that to the poor we must act as to all others, putting ourselves, that is, as they are, in their position. F. HEPPENSTALL, M.A.

Edin.

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## Biblical Criticism.

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CONSTANTINE SIMONIDES, PH.D.

According to the latest corrected account, was born at six in the morning of the 5th November, 1820. He is now nearly about forty-three, though he looks older. He is of the Island of Syme, on the coast of Asia Minor, and considers himself to be of pure Greek descent. His height is rather below the average; and he is sparely made, elegantly fashioned. His complexion has much of sallowness, but his features are handsome and; yet they, too, conform rather to the Eastern type than that of the Greek statue. The hair is black and long; the eyes dark and full of speculation; and the effect is an agreeable, intellectual expression, and the impression of something extraordinary. His manners are though he is somewhat reserved; and the impression made by his appearance is more than confirmed when he

speaks. His English is broken, and very difficult to stand; indeed, it is helped out with occasional words of French, and by reference to the Greek lexicon to find the English equivalent for the word which is in his mind. His talk amply repays the trouble of close attention, and is replete with unusual information, and with opinions which if not always met with assent, are new, characteristic of the man, and well worthy of consideration. He has a profound philosophic theory of art, which has much in common with Mr. Ruskin's. He is well versed in that department of the history of art which relates especially to the Christian era, and he is no mean practitioner in drawing. One of his favorite topics is Egyptian hieroglyphics, on which he agrees altogether with Champollion. He professes, moreover, to read the Enchorial character, and to be acquainted with the language of Ancient Egypt, pretensions which he has made, we believe, by no other modern scholar. To him is committed the subject of manuscripts—which relates to our present business—of these Simonides possesses a large number of every variety of material, and having an appearance of extreme antiquity. By long practice, he can tell the age of a manuscript from the forms of the characters, and he executes their various modifications with admirable dexterity. Such is the man who, in the face of Tischendorf and the learned world, asserted himself in the *Guardian* year before last, to have written in his youth the celebrated manuscript which has been published as the Codex Sinaiticus and is believed by the editor to belong to the fourth century.

According to the account given by Simonides, he was employed by his uncle Benedict in the monastery of Pantocrator on Mount Athos, to write in uncial characters, on vellum, a copy of the Old and New Testaments. The manuscript was destined for presentation to the Emperor Nicholas of Russia. Besides the Old and New Testaments, Simonides translated the Epistle of Barnabas, and the first part of Hermas, and was going to complete the Apostolic Fathers. Ere this could be accomplished, his uncle died, and his supply of vellum

This work was done in the years 1839 and 1840; the manuscript thus produced, Simonides avers to be identical with that since promulged by Tischendorf as the *α Sinaiticus*.

Ever since this account was given to the world, a controversy has been proceeding concerning it, and serious objections have been made to various particulars. Yet if we consider on the one hand that Simonides has but an exceedingly imperfect acquaintance with English, and is thus exposed to great disadvantage in reply, and even in understanding the exact nature of what is alleged against him; and on the other, are disposed to candor towards one whose opinion is favorable to the supposition of his sincerity, we shall find it difficult to discredit the essential part of his story.

How, then, reconcile with this, the manifestly ancient character of Tischendorf's manuscript?

It appears certain that some years ago he rendered valuable service to Tischendorf, by furnishing him with a genuine manuscript fragment of the Shepherd of Hermas. It is also well known, that since that time, whatever the occasion of their misunderstanding, the two scholars have not been on the most amicable terms. Simonides, in all probability, had written in his youth a manuscript of the Scriptures in uncial characters such as he describes. When shown in 1860 a facsimile of a portion of Tischendorf's codex, it is not unlikely that he should pronounce it to be his own work, and that he should persevere in this statement, neglecting the evidence on the other side.

In our next number we propose to state some of the principal reasons in favor of the antiquity of the Codex Sinaiticus.





## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the habit of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be to their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are at present making into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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THE word *theology* is compounded of two Greek words which signify together, *speech concerning God*. But speech signifies knowledge, and λόγος is not only the *word* which expresses the conception, but may mean the *conception itself*. The termination *logy* is very extensively employed in our language to signify the *science* of that which is named in the other part of the word. We have, for instances, *geology*, the science of earth; *anthropology*, the science of man; *ethnology*, the science of nations; *zoology*, the science of animals; *phytology*, the science of plants; *physiology*, animal or vegetable, the science of the nature of animals or vegetables.

There is no presumption necessarily implied in the pursuit of a science of God; since science is only exact knowledge, and the knowledge of God is indispensable to our welfare. The more exact it is, the more beneficial. The consideration of the necessity of this knowledge implies the possibility of its attainment, since nothing is naturally necessary which is impossible. We must, however, be on our guard against irreverence, and dependence upon our own powers, and against irreverent curiosity, remembering that we can know, and ought to know, concerning God, only so much as it may please him to show.

Besides the benefit of this knowledge to the individual, there arises a benefit to the community. Disagreement of opinion implies imperfection of knowledge, since men do not disagree concerning what they really know. The advancement of theology towards perfection has, therefore, a direct ten-

promote unity in doctrine. It appears from these considerations, not only that theology is possible, but that the result of it is lawful and praiseworthy.

Since Christians believe that God has manifested Himself not only in nature, but also in revelation strictly so called, an obvious division suggests itself at the outset between what has been termed *Natural Theology*, or what may be known of God apart from revelation, and *Christian Theology*, or the science of what is taught concerning Him in revelation.

The possibility of the former has been denied, on the ground that a finite universe cannot manifest an infinite Being. The principle, however, is assumed too hastily. To say that what is finite is not an adequate mirror of what is infinite, is right; but the conclusion does not follow. The universe exists; and the power which must have brought it into existence, and on which it rests, is Divine. The universe is perfect, and perfection is an effect of Deity alone.

The Christian Scriptures themselves acknowledge the possibility of (what for want of a better word we term) *Natural Theology*. Rom. i. 20. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, being reasoned of *νοήματα*, by means of the things that are made *τοῖς ποιήμασι*, are clearly seen *καθοπάραι*, even his eternal power and godhead *θεότης*." Here are set forth four things:—

(1) The *means* of Divine knowledge, the *things that are made*.

(2) The *method*, which is the use of the *νοῦς*, the *reason*, which Chrysostom (Homil. lxix. in Matth.) calls "the king of the body," and Macarius (Homil. vii.) *the eye of the soul*, and (Homil. xl.) *the charioteer, which puts to the thoughts, the steeds of the soul, and holds their reins*.

(3) The *objects*, *His invisible things, His eternal power and Godhead*, the *power* which called forth and upholds *τὰ ποιήματα*, the *Godhead* which renders Him worthy of supreme worship.

(4) The *nature and quality* of the knowledge, which is *clear sight*, *καθοπάραι*, the *καρά* in composition here strengthening the notion of the verb.

Since, however, we believe that God has actually appeared on the stage of creaturely action, and has thus directly revealed Himself, we are not dependent on nature even for our knowledge of His existence, and we have a far more advantageous display of His character. If God has actually appeared and spoke before us, there can be no question of His existence; we have only to ask, what has He done, and what has He said? To answer this question is the aim of Christian Theology.

*Christian Theology* deals exclusively with revelation. The Bible is the record of revelation, and bears the same relation to theology which nature does to the science of nature, one particular department of nature—plants, for instance—botany or phytology. This truth has been largely overlooked by theologians, many of whom have mingled philosophical reasoning, more or less accurate, and in greater or less measure, with the teaching of Scripture. But when this way is once cleared by the establishment of the didactic authority of Scripture, Christian Theology has no more to do with philosophy than with geometry or astronomy. It belongs to a separate department. Since, however, it is a science, and all science has a method, we have to inquire into the method which is proper to Christian Theology. The theological procedure, in reference to particular doctrines, is capable of reduction to the general form of a syllogism. For instance, let the question be the nature of the Holy Spirit, and we may reduce the legitimate process to the following:—

Major: Whatever Scripture teaches is true.

Minor: Scripture teaches the personality of the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion: The Holy Spirit is a Person.

Actually to state the syllogism in every process of the kind is, of course, unnecessary, and would only be a cumbrous trifling. Yet some such syllogism is always presupposed. On examination of the above we find that the major and the minor are to be established in different ways. The

major rests on the doctrine of the *Canon of Scripture*, which again deals with the necessity and the existence of a *Rule of Faith*, and defines the *Books* which belong to the Canon. It is also necessary, for the perfection of this definition, that the *text* of each of the books should be accurately ascertained, which is the office of *Biblical Criticism*, the science of manuscripts, ancient versions, quotations in the Fathers, and the like.

The doctrine of the Canon is a branch of the wide subject of *Christian Evidences*, whose aim is to vindicate the claims of Christianity as a Divine revelation, and which in the end avails itself of all the results of theology hitherto, of the *History of the Church*, the character and experience of individual believers, and the general influence of Christianity on society and the welfare of mankind.

The minor proposition of our syllogism presupposes the preliminary work of *Biblical Hermeneutics*, whose handmaids are *Sacred Geography*, *History*, and *Archæology*. Then, if the teaching of the various passages is literally *uniform* and *explicit*, all that is necessary is to classify them and state the result. But in proportion to the existence of *implication*, which is largely found in Scripture, a necessity arises for the construction of a theory which will satisfy the phenomena. Or, if there be, as often happens, *apparent mutual divergence* of teaching, *corrective comparison* of the passages must be employed. If many passages clearly teach the same doctrine, all that we have to do is to state the result, and the evidence is cumulative. But if the doctrine is implied, or there is *apparent divergence*, the mental process takes its character from the nature of the case, and may be instinctive, or one of obvious ratiocination.

Take, as an instance of apparent divergence, the teaching of several passages on the Person of Christ. Here, He is called *the Son of God*; there, to prevent confounding Him with others, to whom a similar name is applied, He is distinguished by the title of *the Only-begotten*. To set forth the pure and heavenly character of His generation, He is called *the Word*; and the eternity of His generation is not

only implied in the very nature of that Word, appears also in the appellation *the radiance*, ἀπαύγασμα *God's glory, the exact image*, χαρακτήρ, *of His substance*. Again, from many passages of the Gospels, taken alone, we attribute to Him creaturely limitation, we might suppose Him a mere man. But we are set right by others; such instance, as Philipp. ii. 6, 7, which tells us that He *originally in the form of God, but emptied Himself* ὁμορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπαρχων . . . ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε. The result of this *corrective comparison* is the doctrine of the one Person and the two natures of Christ, of one Divine Person in two different conditions.

The above processes have sometimes been called by the name of *Induction*; and it has been said that theology follows the inductive method. But they are very far from corresponding to the definition of induction which is given by John Stuart Mill, *System of Logic*, Book III., chap. 1. "Induction is that operation of the mind, by which we infer what we know to be true in a particular case or cases, will be true in all cases which resemble the former in certain assignable respects." There is no such process employed in finding the minor of our syllogism, and the name accordingly must be rejected. The work of the theologian here is to classify the passages which bear directly or indirectly on the given subject, and after developing their implications and reconciling their apparent contradictions, if necessary to make a clear general statement of their doctrine. This is *generalization*, which is the central and characteristic work of Christian Theology, gives the minor of the syllogism.

It is the part of the true theologian, before drawing a conclusion, to compare the minor at which he has arrived with the results of other workers, on the widest scale, with that Christian doctrine which has prevailed everywhere from the beginning. If his result agrees with the other, it receives the strongest confirmation; if it *in essence* differs, there is not only a forcible *argumentum ad verecundiam*, but a probability, amounting almost to certainty, that he is in the wrong.

der may find some excellent remarks on this subject in the Introduction to Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants: A Safe Way to Salvation." We refer him also to the beginning of the fourth chapter in Book II. of Dr. J. Pye's "First Lines of Christian Theology." Even Dr. Pye, when he made his unfortunate appeal to Antiquity, and thus rashly challenged the worshippers, implicitly acknowledged the same principle. On that point there have arisen two warm controversies; the one between the Romanist, who exaggerates the authority of the practical co-ordination with that of Scripture; the other between the Ultra-Protestant, who considers the individual's duty to ascertain Christian doctrine, without regard to the consent of the Church. Sound theology regards the Bible as the primary manual of reference which the Church carries on.

It will probably now be acknowledged by the candid reader that theology is not exposed to the objection of being an unprofitable pursuit, or an imposing tyranny. For the purposes of practical devotion, it is, of course, less than the original warm utterances of Scripture; yet for devotion it indirectly affords no unimportant aid. Instead of being a tyrannous deceit, it rather exposes the false colors the false and unrighteous dogmas with which men have adulterated the truth, misrepresented God, and perverted Christianity, brought the conscience into bondage, and driven men to the miserable refuge of infidelity. It is a deliverance from this grievous yoke. Thoroughly scientific in its claims only a secondary authority based on that of Nature; and the humility which it requires is the humility of the philosopher, the wise submission of the understanding to the facts which have been disclosed by the Authority of Nature and of the Faith.



# The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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## *Quinquagesima Sunday.*

“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”—1 Joh

SINCE the Collect and the Epistle for this day both before us that charity “without which all our doing nothing worth,” it is desirable to contemplate the Force of it in God Himself. God’s character is of the utmost importance to us. We are in His power as creatures, and worshippers our characters are certain to be moulded by it. It is of no less importance to society than to individuals. Unless there be something in it which is capable of becoming the foundation of a righteous human society, and of sustaining such a society when founded, there is no possibility of our living together in peace. But if God is a Father and King, we may expect a family where all will love as brethren, an everlasting kingdom, under His righteous and merciful government.

Very legible characters of benevolence are written in Nature and in Providence. Yet *all* that we see is not reconcilable with our notions of a perfect Deity. Nature and Providence have both their dark mysteries. Revelation clears up much which was obscure, but it also brings new mysteries into view. If the telescope resolves some old nebulae, it gives to others a more dubious aspect before, and brings new ones, as yet insoluble, within the range of vision.

No one among mortals has ever had better opportunity of knowing the truth on this high matter than the Holy Apostle and Evangelist, the friend of his Master, who reclined on Jesus’ breast at the supper, and who stood by the

eagle he soared, with face turned toward the sun, and with the splendor. Returning to his expectant people he thus reports the result : *God is light, and in darkness at all* ; and then, lest we should suppose a cheerless, merely intellectual light, he adds that truth is inseparable from it. The *message* he was sent to deliver to the Church was this : *God is light, is love* ; the light of truth and the warmth of love are blended in one eternal glory. This message is, in that sense, *the Gospel*, the glad message, the principle of all which is entitled to the name.

Love is an attribute of a *person*, and we have, therefore, a clear revelation of God's personality. He is not merely a principle, but a Person, or a unity of Persons. That which is here affirmed of God, is affirmed of that nature which belongs equally to the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.

God is not solitary. In eternity He dwells not alone. Ere He shot a ray across the darkness, or a seraph had appeared before the throne, there was a Divine Society, held together by mutual and ineffable love. Since love must have an Object each of the Persons of the Trinity was so. The Father loveth the Son, the Son the Father, and the Spirit is the Object of a love from both, which He returns to the Father and to the Son.

The very name of *Father* involves love. The Father loves the Son as the exact Image of Himself. Love moved Him to create ; and in the Son He loves the creature, the work of His hand. Christ's Sonship is the ground of ours. The laws of Nature and Providence, however great, are in consistent with the character of the Father ; and it must at last be made clear to all who, during this present trial and perplexity, hold fast their faith that *God*

returns the Father's love, and this He desires the world to know. He imitates the Father, fulfils His will, and



always "doeth the things which please him." Thus He reveals the Father to the world. His death is an obvious and glorious manifestation of love. In the light of that death we shall, if we are wise, regard all mysteries, and believe steadfastly that *God is love*.

The Holy Ghost is the very Spirit of love, of the mutual love of the Father and the Son. It was "through the Eternal Spirit that the Son offered Himself without spot to God." The struggles of the mind, when searching for truth or laboring under a consciousness of sin, are sometimes fearful. Then it is a celestial solace to know that this sorrowful experience is under the direction of the tender Physician of our souls, who inflicts pain only in order to health, and who, when the end is reached, "*healeth the broken in heart, and giveth medicine to heal their sicknesses. The Spirit maketh intercession within us, with groanings unutterable*" Then the mourner, relieved, learns by experience that what is true of the Father and of the Son is true also of the Comforter. *God is love*. In this spirit Christ comforted His disciples when on earth; and departing, *sent them another Comforter to abide with them for ever*. Therefore the Apostle beseeches his Roman brethren, not only *for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, but also for the love of the Spirit*.

The prominent symbols of the presence and operation of the Spirit, mostly tend obviously in the same direction. After His resurrection, Jesus *breathed* on the apostles, in token of intimate friendship and Divine influence. They were so near Him, that they felt His very breath, and this gave them life and power. The *wind* of the Spirit is not driving or destructive, but genial and fostering. In the spring of the year, when nature awakes from her long slumber, and exchanges the robe of snow for green, when fountains are unsealed, the ploughshare gleams in the softened furrow, and after the gentle rain, the fresh primrose unfolds her brightness to the sun, amid the song of birds at the loosened stream, an influence secretly going forth so gentle as to be imperceptible, yet of irresistible might.

has effected the marvellous resurrection and transformation, of which delighted men can give no other account than this—that *the wind has changed*.

When John the Baptist first received his commission, he seems not to have been fully acquainted with the evangelic character of Him whom he announced. He gave only a severe representation of the Christ as a holy Lord who would take vengeance on the ungodly. He spoke of the *wrath to come*, of an *axe laid at the root of the trees*, of *fire* that was ready to devour the unfruitful tree and the chaff. Yet what descended on Jesus? A gentle Dove; for Jesus came to reveal the Godhead, and *God is love*. "If you would see the Trinity," says one of the Fathers, "go to the Jordan." There the Bird of love hovers over the obedient Son, and the Voice is heard pronouncing the Fatherly benediction.

II. *He that loveth not knoweth not God*. The relation between the two parts of the text seems to be indicated by the preceding verse: *Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God*. The children of God are like Him, loving Him and loving one another; and since love knows love, the love which is in them enables them to know God.

The regenerate are *children of the Father*, whose eternal breast is the original fountain and abode of love. As the Father loves the Son, they love Him as their elder brother, who prays *that the love wherewith Thou has loved Me may be in them, and I in them*. As the Father hath forgiven all of them for Christ's sake, it is their part to forgive each other, and live in mutual love as brethren.

The regenerate are *brethren of Christ*, in whose image they are newly created. They partake of His love toward the Father, and have received from Him a *new commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you*. It is called a new commandment, because Christ's love, on which it is based, is new and unexampled in the world. So when the disciples began to observe it, their love was so extraordinary

that it excited wonder. *See how they love one another.* An men knew that they were disciples of Jesus.

The regenerate are *creatures of the Spirit of Love*. By Him they are anointed, illuminated, quickened. From Him they have received a *Divine nature*. Is He a genial, fostering breath? *So is every one that is born of the Spirit*. The Dove that descended on Jesus is hovering near them; and *the fruit of the Spirit is love*.

*The love which is in the regenerate enables them to know God.* The knowledge of God is called our eternal life. To know that we are not in the hands of fate, of nature, of chance, or of indifferent and cold omnipotence, but in the hands of a Father; to feel His love revealed in Jesus; to know that every good thought within us, every upward aspiration, is due to the love of the Spirit, who has constant access to our hearts, and a blessed union with them—this is to have eternal life. To know that God is, of whose glory creation is but the shadow, whose perfection boundlessly surpasses the loftiest idea of excellence which has entered mind of man or seraph; to know that His glory is not pent up or concealed, but ever shines forth in the face of Jesus in order to bless the adoring congregation of the just, and bring them to the likeness of itself—this is eternal life. But this knowledge is of love; by love only can love be known. If we feel the warmth of the heavenly Sun, we enjoy His illumination also.

*No man hath seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.* He declares Him, because he knows Him; for love is the interpreter of love. And the greater our likeness to Christ, that is, the more loving we become, the clearer and the more enlarged will be our knowledge of God, the better shall we be qualified to receive the revelation He makes. Every degree of love's growth is a step nearer God, and brings into clearer light the heights on which He is enthroned. In order to this knowledge of God, our natural affections were given, and were intended for stepping-stones to eternal life. A man whose heart has been enlarged and softened by children, is

ready to understand *the Lord's great mercy unto them that fear Him*. A man who shuts not up his compassion from the wretched, can best appreciate the love of Christ in dying for us, and *enter into his Lord's joy*, when His intervention shall have proved successful. So he who is able to comfort his fellows, knows somewhat of the love of the Blessed Spirit, the Comforter.

The negative is true also. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God. A man who is in despair on account of sin*, who conceives the Ruler of the world as austere and vengeful—has fear, not love. God is not a mere just maintainer of law, for law itself is based upon love, and is ever subject to it. Look at the cross of Christ; see there that God is our Father, and give light and peace into thy bosom.

This negative is sometimes illustrated by *theological* *mistakes*. We have all some *power*, and can conceive of power unlimited, a Being all will, influenced by no considerations external to Himself. But let us beware of exalting this conception to the throne of the universe. An Omnipotent Sovereign, lawlessly deciding the eternal destinies of mankind, may be terribly sublime, but cannot be venerable. This is not the God of the Catholic Christian. We have all but a small measure of *intellect*, and can conceive of a being wholly intellectual. Neither must this conception be lifted up to Divine supremacy. A speculator, coolly calculating concerning everlasting joys and everlasting misery, as if the whole history of living men were a problem in mathematics, is not the God of the Catholic Christian. No, brethren, a true heart knows God no more than the icicle the sun or the warmth of spring. What is noblest in us, and what is most active and venerable, is but a faint shadow of Divine perfection. Yet, faint as it may be, it is the basis of Divine relation. Power is not our best; nor is intellect; our greatest endowment is love; and he who has it knows that His almighty arm is guided by unerring wisdom, but that we are the servants of His love. This old and everlasting gospel remains unaffected by all the errors of the day. He

with whom we have to do, the ground of our existence, the Lord of conscience, is *the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Are there some of us to whom this doctrine of St. John sounds like faint echoes of music from some remote inaccessible shore, which can be very interesting or intelligible only to men of a peculiarly refined mental constitution, or initiates into saintly mysteries? If we think so, we are wrong. The further we are from this lofty but most practical truth, the further from our own true destiny. Nor is the path to that region untraceable by mortal feet. It has often been trodden by men like us. It may be trodden again, by every one of us, if we will. The top of the patriarch's ladder may be lost amid the clouds which surround the ineffable Splendor, yet the foot of it is planted firmly on the soil. Here it rests on the hearth, here beside the altar. Would you know God, then cherish every tender domestic feeling, use every neighbourly kindness and Christian charity. Each of these is a mirror of God. Of them all may we say as Christ said of one. If we, *being evil*, have these good things amongst us still, if these embers of grace are smouldering here in this distant region, then what must be the flame in Heaven! *How much more! How much more!*

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### CHRISTIAN PIETY IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE.

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."—John viii. 56.

In this chapter Christ charges the Jews with a cardinal sin, namely, *judging spiritual*

*things by carnal principles.* "Ye judge after flesh," (ver. 15). This is their fundamental error of interpretation. In this chapter He speaks to them of three spiritual things—*ritual freedom, spiritual deliverance, and spiritual vision.* I

they mis-understood, of their cardinal interpretation. They took Christ to mean a statement in the past Abraham had seen with his material eye; as, Christ meant spight. The text leads us to consider;—*the aspect of an piety in relation to the future, and we in-*

THAT CHRISTIAN PIETY FASTENS THE SOUL TOWARDS THE FUTURE. It turned Abraham's eye to the day of Christ." It refers undoubtedly to the incarnation, personal life, and spiritual reign. In long centuries rolled on between Abraham and the day of Christ's incarnation. We saw it. Christian piety does two things in the relation to the future.

*It gives an interesting view of the future.* Science, literature, shed light upon the on-coming of our being; but the future does. It opens up the future history of the race. Secondly: *Christian piety has a felt interest in the future of the future.* It gave Abraham a felt interest in the day of Christ. It gives us a felt interest in the things that are coming. And glorious things are on the march. We infer—

II. THAT CHRISTIAN PIETY FASTENS THE SOUL UPON CHRIST IN THE FUTURE. "My day." To the godly, Christ is everything in the future—"The glory of their brightest days, and comforts of their nights." Do the rivers point to the sea? Does the needle point to the pole? Do the plants point to the sun? Does hunger cry for food? Does life pant for air? Even so does the heart of Christian piety point to Christ in the future. To us Christ has a day in the future, His universal day on earth, the day of His glorious revelation at the Judgment. We infer—

III. THAT CHRISTIAN PIETY BRINGS JOY TO THE SOUL FROM THE FUTURE. It made Abraham glad. He was glad with a *benevolent* gladness, he knew the world would be blessed by Christ's advent; he was glad with a *religious* gladness; he knew that God would be glorified by His advent. Several reasons might make us glad when we think of the coming day of Christ. (1) In His day there will be a solution of all difficulties. Everything will be explained. (2) In His day there will be the termination of all imperfections, physical, mental, spiritual. (3) In His day there will be the consummation of unending

blessedness. "They shall hunger no more." &c. Learn from this subject—First: *The congruity of Christianity with the prospective tendency of the human soul.* The soul is everlastingly pointing to the future. Christianity meets this tendency, ministers to it, satisfies it. Learn—Secondly: *The antidote of Christianity to the forebodings of the soul.* Some souls are constantly boding evil, and well all ungodly souls may. Christianity lights up the future. We learn—Thirdly: *The supplies of Christianity to the highest aspirations of the soul.* Wonderful is the good after which some souls are aspiring in the future. The present and the material have lost for them their attractions. They have done with them; they have thrown them away as boys who have sucked the orange throw away the peel. Christianity meets these loftiest aspirations. Man cannot aspire after anything higher than that which Christianity supplies; "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard," &c.

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THE REMARKABLE IN CHRIST  
AND THE IMPROPER IN HIS  
HEARERS.

"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into

the hands of men: and he shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And ye shall exceedingly sorrow."—22, 23.

WE have already passed so parallel (Matt. xvi. 21—23) is somewhat difficult from this a new line. If we look at the order to illustrate i.e. something remaining concerning Christ, and improper concern hearers, the difficulties are obviated, and some ideas may be developed.

I. SOMETHING REMAINING CONCERNING CHRIST. Things here are very valuable. First: His own of Himself—"Son of Man." Why should He call the Son of Man? Every man the son of Man. Are not all the sons of Man spring of the first Adam? (1) Men, generally children of certain modern men, for they identify themselves with or other of the characteristics such as the Asiatic, the European, the Ethiopian, and they have the peculiarities of their families. In connection to this, we may say that Christ was an

\* See Homlist, vol. I. p. 615.

ly. He was, in His  
 al organization, what  
 iginal man was, and  
 od intended a man to  
 ) Men, generally, are  
 ldren of certain coun-  
 They have national  
 istics and predilec-  
 They live in, and for,  
 therland. Nationality,  
 , is often stronger  
 narity. They would  
 themselves, and  
 tions, for the interest  
 own. In contra-  
 on to this, Christ  
 cosmopolitan. The  
 irth was His country,  
 men were His fellow-  
 He lived for MAN, not  
 ns. His sympathies  
 the world. In this  
 was an ideal citizen  
 earth. (3) Men,  
 y, are the children of  
 They are born, and  
 up, in connexion  
 me religious sects.  
 e, to a great extent,  
 tures and organs of a  
 system. Their re-  
 ntellect is tied to a  
 Their religious enthu-  
 bounded by sectarian  
 In contra-distinction  
 Christ's ideas came  
 from the Divine and  
 ing Fountain of  
 The Church He lived  
 for, was the Kingdom  
 en. He was an ideal  
 ist. "God is a Spirit,"  
 e, "and they," &c.

Secondly : *His future know-  
 ledge of Himself.* This is a  
 very remarkable thing. He  
 here foresees His Betrayal,  
 Crucifixion, and Resurrection.  
 Two things here are suggested  
 in favor of His superhumanity.  
 (1) His power to attain such  
 a knowledge suggests this. It  
 is not given to men to know  
 the future of their life. Even  
 the morrow is shrouded in  
 mystery. But Christ saw the  
 whole of His future. The  
 mystery of all future ages was  
 open to His eye. (2) *His  
 power to bear this knowledge  
 suggests this :* Had we a reve-  
 lation of even the future of  
 one week, I question whether  
 it would not paralyze our  
 energies. But Christ sees His  
 Betrayal, Crucifixion, and  
 Resurrection, hears the facts,  
 and talks about them.

II. SOMETHING VERY IM-  
 PROPER CONCERNING HIS  
 HEARERS. It is said they  
 were "exceeding sorry."  
 Why were they sorry? Un-  
 less they were sorry on ac-  
 count of the enormous  
 human wickedness which was  
 involved in the coming suf-  
 ferings of the Son of God,  
 which is by no means likely,  
 their sorrow was manifestly  
 improper. What then was  
 their sorrow? First : *Was it the  
 sorrow of sympathy for them-  
 selves?* Did they tremble at  
 the loss which they them-



selves would sustain at His departure. It is likely they did. But even this sorrow was wrong, inasmuch as the very facts concerning His future life, which He had just stated to them, were essentially necessary to their own happiness. Poor short-sighted men, we often regret the very loss which serves our highest interest! Secondly: *Was it the sorrow of sympathy for their fellow-men?* Did they think of what their contemporaries would lose by the departure of Christ from the world? and did this make them sad? If so, their sorrow was improper, for His crucifixion, &c., was the only power which could truly help the world. Third: *Was it the sorrow of sympathy for Him?* Did they feel commiseration for Him on account of the dreadful agonies which awaited Him? If so, then pity was ill-bestowed. In His greatest agonies He was not an object of pity, but of admiration. He was not a sufferer from necessity, but from choice. To the women who saw Him bear His cross by the way he said, "Weep not for me," &c.

#### CHRIST AT GENNESARET.

"And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gen-  
nesaret. And when the men of

that place had knowledge of they sent out into all that country round about, and brought him all that were diseased; besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole. Matt. xiv. 34—36.

THE storm is over, the agitated minds of the disciples are hushed in peace, and the little ship, with its precious cargo, has safely reached Gen-  
nesaret. The designation "land of Gen-  
nesaret" is given to the western shore of the lake. According to Josephus the district extended thirty furlongs in length, and twenty in breadth; the climate seems to have been exceedingly mild, and the soil fertile; to this delightful spot Christ now retired. The practical lessons of this incident are few but important; we shall do little more than state them.

I. THE ADVANTAGE OF SEIZING OUR OPPORTUNITIES  
"When the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out unto all that country &c. His appearance there perhaps never again to occur they seized at once; they caught the tide of mercy at the flood. It was the hour and they used it right! There are auspicious crises in every man's history, which if promptly seized, as

sed, would bless our  
ever. These neg-  
destiny darkens.  
period of early  
is an auspicious  
) The period of  
ression is an aus-  
us.

E INFLUENCE WE  
BLE OF EXERTING

These men of  
, not only per-  
iled themselves of  
3, but "they sent  
all the country  
ut, and brought  
all that were  
Through them,  
who otherwise  
remained ignorant  
pearance, and suf-  
their afflictions, got  
gence of Him and  
ved. What these  
the duty of all :  
in their neighbour-  
hrist's presence in  
of them. (2.) To  
their neighbours to  
selves of His help.

IE PRINCIPLE WHICH  
UR SUCCESS. "*They  
in that they might  
the hem of his gar-  
as many as touched  
perfectly whole.*"  
faith was this !

not expect any  
ion or effort on  
rt. They did not  
striking of the

hand on any place as Naaman  
did (2 Kings v. 11). Their  
touch of His garment they  
felt to be enough. How  
came they to this faith ?  
Perhaps they had heard of  
the woman with the bloody  
issue, who probably lived in  
that district, who was cured  
by touching the hem of His  
garment. But great as was  
their faith, the success they  
met with was exactly equal  
to it : they believed that  
touching the hem of His  
garment would do it. "*As  
many as touched were made  
perfectly whole.*" The result  
was measured by their faith ;  
so it ever is : great faith will  
achieve great things ; it ever  
has done so, and so it will  
again. Virtue streams through  
every avenue of the universe  
from Christ ; and the touch  
of faith will bring it to our  
being.

#### MERCY, NOT MERIT.

"Understand, therefore, that  
the Lord thy God giveth thee not  
this good land to possess it for thy  
righteousness ; for thou art a stiff-  
necked people."—Deut. ix. 6.

THE text suggests that mercy  
and not merit is the cause of  
all the blessings of our being.

I. THIS IS TRUE OF OUR  
SECULAR POSSESSIONS. All  
the blessings connected with

our lot in life come not because of our righteousness, for we are a "stiffnecked people." If we say that our comfortable homes, our freedom from temporal anxiety, and our possession of a competency, have come to us as the result of industrious efforts and economical habits, that they are our reward for honest labor—our reply is—First: *That to such a reward we have no right.* We are sinners, and justly deserve not only destitution but destruction. We reply—Secondly: *That both the materials of labor, and the power to labor, which have brought us these comforts, are to be ascribed to His mercy.* It is He that has given us the earth whereon to labor, and the energy with which to work. "His constant visitation preserveth our spirits."

II. THIS IS TRUE OF OUR RELIGIOUS ADVANTAGES. We have Bibles, we have sanctuaries, we have religious literature of every grade and excellence. This is our distinction as a people; millions upon millions have them not. Why have we Britons these? Because of our merit? No! We are "astiffnecked people." They are to be ascribed to mercy alone. "The tender mercies of our God have visited us."

III. THIS IS TRUE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE. We have been called from darkness to light, to an enlarged mental knowledge of the truth of Christ. We have been freed from a blessed conscience, we have known what the pleasures, the hopes, the aspirations, the holy fellowships of true religion are. Why were we made people of this character? Not because of any merit. No! We were "a stiffnecked people." It is all in

IV. THIS IS TRUE SPIRITUAL USEFULNESS. Have we rendered any service to the world? Have we given truth impulse in our age? Has the Gospel been extended in any measure? Has the spiritual empire of truth been enlarged of God? Are we missionaries? Are we men and have we won man to Christ;—authors—our writings dissipate pernicious errors, wake up the most indolent inquiry, and lead into the domain of truth. Whatever our success in this direction, why has it been so? Because of our merit? By no means. It is all of mercy. "Not by might, nor by power," &c. plants, Apollos waters,

V. THIS IS TRUE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE.

ward to "an inherit-  
corruptible, undefiled,  
at fading not away."

to be there one day;  
in one of the "many  
as" of our Father's

But shall we have it  
own merit, on account  
own righteousness? By  
us. It is all of mercy.  
vers, this doctrine

humble us. We  
nothing whereof to  
However elevated our  
in life; however dis-  
ed our excellence of  
or; however brilliant

umphs in the cause of  
we have nothing  
to glory. We ascribe  
to our righteousness,  
have none, but to the  
ce of Heaven. Let

doctrine encourage us.  
: imperfect and un-  
n character, let us not  
despair under a sense  
option, since salvation

ry evils all of mercy.  
e inspired with ador-  
tude, for all we have  
to be we owe to the  
Heaven. "Bless the  
our souls!" &c.

#### PATH TO GODLINESS.

ends of the world shall  
and turn unto the LORD:  
the kindreds of the na-  
worship before thee."—  
7.

age leads us to con-  
path to godliness, and

that there are three stages in  
the path to perfect godliness.

I. REMEMBRANCE is the  
FIRST stage. "The world  
shall remember." Remember-  
ing implies *subjects*; things  
that we recall to mind. What  
are those things, the memory  
of which tends God-ward?  
First: *The memory of what  
God is, and what He requires.*  
Secondly: *The memory of  
what we are, and what we  
deserve.* Thirdly: *The memory  
of what Christ has done, and  
how we should act.*

II. TURNING is the SE-  
COND stage. Godliness be-  
gins with the intellect—with  
thought and memory. "I  
thought of my ways and I  
turned my feet into thy sta-  
tutes." The mind, dwelling  
upon these subjects, generates  
emotions in the heart that  
determine the will, and the  
soul turns to the Lord.  
First: *Turns in profound  
contrition.* Secondly: *In  
earnest prayer.* The soul in  
its depraved state is going  
away from the Lord; thought  
arrests it, and brings it back.

III. WORSHIP is the THIRD  
stage. "Shall worship be-  
fore thee." Worship is a  
loving self-surrender of the  
soul to God. It is the soul  
absorbed in the sublimest  
reverence, adoration and

praise. It is the soul delighting itself in the Lord, and chanting evermore, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, or on earth that I desire beside thee," &c. This is heaven. *This is the path of godliness* not only for an individual, but for the *nations* and the *world*. It is not until all the tribes of humanity properly remember the Lord, that they will turn unto Him, and worship before Him.

#### A JOYFUL SYLLOGISM.

"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."—Ps. lxiü. 7.

I. THE CAUSE. Here is—First: *A grateful memory*. "Thou hast been my help." When grace comes, it comes to the whole soul; a new retrospective power is given as well as a prospective one. One glad necessity of the new life is, "Thou shalt remember all the way," &c. Unbelief, on the other hand, has a bad memory. "They soon forgot his works." (Ps. cvi. 13.) Secondly: *A personal possession*. "Thou art my God." The soul lifts its hand, not to grasp abstract truth, nor a doctrinal system, but a personal God. Mix in holier company, rise to higher employments, the Christian

may and shall; but to higher *rank* is impossible here and now we are *children of God* by faith in Christ. Thirdly: *A joy*. How precarious the present life of man! Rich comforts die, friends thrones reel, crowns death levels; but those which *cannot* be shaken. (Heb. xii. 27.) *lovingkindness is better life.*"

II. THE EFFECT. "fore," &c. Three ideas illustrate this:—First *fuge*. "Thou art my place; thou shalt protect me from trouble." The name of the Lord is a *strong tower*," &c. This refuge is ample, accessible, and firm.

"Rock of Ages cleft for me,"

Secondly: *Rest*. God is our resting-place. We are invited to enjoy it by the Spirit (Matt xi. 29.) And Jesus has said with tearful gladness, "Return unto thy rest, my soul; for the Lord dealt bountifully with me." This rest is reciprocal; to Him, He comes to us. "This is my rest for ever" (Ps. cxxxii. 14.) Won't you have fellowship! The helper leaning on the helper, the sinful on the sinless, the aching, guilty head, resting on the bosom of God.

Thirdly: *Residence*. God is our dwelling-place. He has been so in all generations. He has two thrones; the highest heavens, and the humblest hearts. (Isa. lvii. 15.) (1.) The heart is the dwelling-place of Christ. Paul prayed that Christ might dwell in the heart by faith. (Eph. iii. 17.) (2.) Of the Spirit. "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 9.) (3.)

Of the Word. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," &c. (Col. iii. 16.) (4.) Of the source of practical obedience. "He that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in Christ and Christ in him." (1 John iii. 24.) Glorious hope for the needy; refuge, rest, and residence are found under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty.

H. T. M.

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### CHIVALRY.

The ideal of chivalry, which Spencer has thus described,

"Nought is more honorable to a knight,  
Nor better duth beseem brave chivalry,  
Than to defend the people in their  
right,  
And wrong redress in such as wend  
swy."

has much in it to command our admiration. To battle against wrong, in a spirit of *righteous* and *generous* heroism, is, of all services, most honorable and Divine, so far as it goes. The great mistake, however, of the chivalrous knights of these times, was this—their attempt to crush the wrong by violence. By the lance, the sword, and the battle-axe, they sought to put down that spirit of injustice and rapine that roused the indignation of their manly natures. This was a mistake that neutralized their efforts, and blackened the history of their exploits. This, also, is the huge mistake of ages, a mistake which is being constantly committed even by the most enlightened nations of our own times

—a mistake, too, by which the kingdoms of the earth are tossed about on the unresting, tumultuous, and *bloody* sea of civil and national wars.

The attempt to put down wrong by *violence*, we hold to be just as absurd as the attempt to break stones by argument, thaw ice by love, or to govern the steam engine by the Ten Commandments.

### THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT.

The religious element is the strongest power in human nature. It may, alas, it often is, so *overlaid* by sensuality and worldliness, and remains so dormant, that men may even doubt its existence. Rut let it be *roused*, and *every other power in life* shall be to it only as a straw to the avalanche. Let the general awake it in his army, his men will fight with the desperate energy of Cromwell's battalions. Excite it, and then "Deus vult" shall be a talismanic watchword that shall lead men and women, not only to burn their own children in the flames, but mutilate their own flesh,

and immolate their own existence. The force of this religious element in man, is the strongest of all arguments for a God. Does not the eye imply light? the ear sound? Do not the appetites imply provisions? Do we not in Nature find supplies exquisitely suited for all our physical organs and natural cravings? And can it be, that the deepest thirst of man's soul is for a God, and there is no God? Impossible! All analogy denies it; all our intuitions raise their protest against the impious thought.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF CREDULITY.

How comes it to pass, that men, in many cases sensible and enlightened, are so credulous and dupeable in connexion with religion? There must be some cause, and that cause must be *universal*, for the phenomenon is universal. What is it? It can only be accounted for on the supposition that the religious element has a vital relation to the *mysterious*. Our senses bring us into connexion with the *material* universe, our *intellect* brings us into connexion with the *reason* of things, but our *religious sentiment* brings us into connexion with *God, the Incomprehensible One*. The soul has an instinct for mystery, a craving for it. It sees mystery everywhere. It is a haze, enfolding the minute and the vast, a dark sea on which the universe floats. It is an ubiquitous spirit, The soul when excited, lives, revels, and worships under its mystic shadows. Man must have mystery, he cannot do without it. To talk against mystery is to talk against your nature, against the universe, against God. It is in mystery that the soul catches its poetic raptures, and kindles its lamp of piety and devotion.

#### THE USE OF HISTORY.

History gives us power over the great men and tyrants of past ages.

Those ruthless warriors, ecclesiastics, crafty statesmen, despotic kings, who stride into the heart of their age, drag as *miserable* criminals before our judgment. They stand before us as prisoners, announce a sentence doom to the execration of ages. They sport with the monster world in history, as we see beasts in a cage of iron, with deadly fangs and claws, they look and ferocious roar. They threw their age into an age of fear, alarm us not. If we look at them, it is with indignation with terror; if we speak of them it is with contempt, not with pity.

#### JUDGMENT, THOUGH DEATH, APPROACHES.

Every judgment coming is as the springing of a mine. It is a moment of deep suspense. The match has been applied, the fuse which is to fire it. Men stand at a distance, holding their breath. There is seen but a thin, small cloud of white smoke, rising faintly, fainter till it seems to die. Then men breathe again, the inexperienced soldier will approach the place, think the thing has been a failure. It is only faith in the expectation of the commander or the general which keeps men from retreating to the spot again; till, just when expectation has begun to wane, the low, deep thunder of the column of earth man to heaven, and all that comes crashing down again, far circle, shattered and broken with the blast.

It is so with this world. God's Word the world is. The moment of suspense is the first centuries in which expected the convulsion

place at once; and even apostles were looking for it in their lifetime. We have fallen upon days of scepticism. There are no signs of ruin yet. We tread upon it like a solid thing, fortified by its adamantine hills for ever. There is nothing against that but a few words in a printed book. But the

world is mined, and the spark has fallen; and just at the moment when serenity is at its height, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," and the feet of the avenger shall stand on earth.

REV. F. W. ROBERTSON, M.A.

## IN MEMORIAM.

### REV. RICHARD ALLIOTT, LL.D.

THE last days of 1863 were also the last days of him whose name we have inscribed, with gratitude and affection, at the head of this page. Richard Alliott was born into this world in September, 1804, and into the great unseen world in December, 1863. Though he had thus only approached three-score years, all would, for some time past, have judged him a greater age, for hard mental toil and continual nervous excitement had long made his delicate and shrunken physique appear to be that of the old man. And now that he has gone where life has always the bloom of youth and the dew of the morning, it is fitting that the hands of some of his many students, in the three colleges of which he was successively theological tutor, should hasten to weave a wreath, or pile a cairn, or rear a monument to his memory. However much more worthily it ought to be done, and indeed, could be done by others, it is a sacred pleasure to us to be privileged here to record his *in memoriam*.

Dr. Alliott studied for the ministry among the Independents, in Homerton and Glasgow; evincing, both at the Dissenting Academy and at the more pretentious University, a distinguished diligence and ability, one of whose early fruits was the honorable degree that he bore. Having afterwards, for some years, and with much success, held the pastorates of churches in the provinces and the metropolis, he was induced to become the President of the Western College, and thence was led first to Cheshunt, and finally to Spring Hill College, Birmingham. With his course at the two former colleges we are most familiar. At Plymouth he was surrounded by students who, in attainments and position, to-day rank as high as most in their denomination; and at Cheshunt he was mainly instrumental in raising a drooping, and invigorating what had become a very feeble institution. Its prosperity in his day, in many of those points where college vitality is expected to develop itself, is a worthy monument to his memory, and has had not a little to do with the fact



that now, under the influence of its present high-souled President, is fulfilling a mission of which many colleges of older and larger growth might well be ambitious.

Dr. Alliot entered, with a very willing sympathy, into the temporal, mental, and spiritual circumstances of his students. He not unfrequently assisted from his own purse any that were poor, and strenuously exerted himself for the advantage of all. In this he was a contrast to many of the cold, distant, and ceremonious professors, whose influence students have often deplored, and languishing colleges have developed. Perhaps no tutor ever aimed so earnestly at making his students industrious. Sunrise, and even sunset, have found us listening to and transcribing his lectures—which continual verbatim transcribing, was, by the bye, a drudgery that no professor, who would live in the unclouded memory of his students, need imitate. These lectures were valued highly by a great majority of his students; some there were, of course, who infest colleges as well as churches, whose dismal Aristophanean tones were *βρεκεκεκεξ, ΚΟ'ΑΞ, ΚΟ'ΑΞ*. Such, however, were chiefly dyspeptic, indolent, or eccentric.

The value of his lectures arose from this. The eye of his mind was very keen, and the hand of his mind, especially when it held the knife of criticism, very agile. With two of the first philosophers of our time, J. D. Morell and Sir William Hamilton, he had the honor of a passage of arms, and their works, and those of a similar kind, were delicious prey to his voracious logical appetite. His Congregational lecture on Psychology and Theology bears witness to this. But this very point of his strength was the source of his defects. Logic, and that too of a somewhat formal type, was his tyrant, not his servant. And hence imagination, all spiritual analogies, and every form and phase of poetry, was as foreign to him as telegraphy probably is to the inhabitants of Timbuctoo. This was, doubtless, a deformity, and its influence was moral as well as mental. But though he had a metaphysical creed and habit, that, in many things, cramped and dwarfed him, Dr. Alliot was by no means narrow or sectarian in religious matters. As we are writing for the "Homilist" we are reminded that his was one of the first pens to commend publicly this magazine, and his subsequent gift of all its volumes to Chestnut College library showed the continuance of his sympathy. The Biblical Liturgy, too, met with his warm approval and encouragement. We remember his saying that very early in his ministry he had the honor of being branded as a heretic, on account of some magazine article which he had written. Hence, though he was believed by his denomination to be "sound" enough to be raised to the highest of their pinnacles, as Chairman of the Congregational Union, he still had a heart that would always secretly welcome, and in his bravest moods a hand that would openly help, any genuine and free struggle after truth and devotion. And so, now, as we place this last stone on the pile,—for we feel this!

wreath nor monument, only an honest rugged cairn,—we say to the Memory " of one of the most earnest, active, and withal, kindly, and unselfish of lives; and we know the heart of many ident of his will affectionately say "Amen."

## Theological Notes and Queries.

### OPEN COUNCIL.

Let freedom of honest thought be permitted in this department. The Editor therefore uses his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be held free from responsibility.]

#### PANT BAPTISM.

IT. In answer to QUERIST

3. To the general question, "Scriptural to baptize of ungodly parents?"

Yes; if the parents

. To the first of the

questions, as to inquiry

parents, we answer, No.

that the children are

applies on the part of

an outward profession

and beyond this we have

to claim. Our Lord

not stop to inquire the

motives of the parents

for their children to

conduct on that occa-

He teaches that He will

His Church, as then to

g, all children who come

these remarks also con-

ver to the second minor

ely we have no right to

is of parents on their

specially, when by the

the parents are not so

as to throw overboard

spect to Christ's or-

P. H., M.A.

is at once just and merciful, and that these attributes of His character are in joint and harmonious operation. Multitudes, probably, both of the Jews and of those who lived before the Mosaic system, recognized in their sacrifices that future salvation which was to be wrought out by the promised seed; but a far greater number must be supposed to have stopped short at the rite, through want of spiritual discernment. When the pre-figured *fact* was thus forgotten, let us consider whether the moral *principle* exhibited in the ceremony might not still, in some measure, be understood, and affect the character of the devout worshipper. The full vindication of God's holiness, and of the truth of His denunciations against sin, could indeed rest only on the sacrifice of the Divine Saviour; but although those who saw this great thing through the types which partially obscured whilst they represented it, could alone receive the full benefits of the institution, shall we think that those who did not enter into the spirit of prophecy were entirely excluded from the operation of its principle, and saw nothing of the Divine character manifested in it?"—*Remarks on Internal Evidence*, by THOMAS ERSKINE, pp. 130, 131.

#### THE OF THE ANCIENT ISRAELITE.

IT. In answer to QUERIST

3. "The *fact* was the

Christ for the sins of the

*principle* was that God

## THE PROBATION OF ANGELS.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 3, p. 56. Will you kindly define what you mean by *probation* in this case, and direct us to some sources of information on the subject? What Scripture teaches us, that while some angels *kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation*, others are obedient and holy. (Jude 6, 9.)

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*Queries to be answered.*

4.—Will the Church, i.e., the mystic bride, be so complete at the coming of our Lord as to be incapable of addition?—C. M.

5.—Will the Jews ever form part of the mystic bride, or glorified Church?—C. M.

6.—Is not the glorified Church, and ever shall be, a distinct body from the *saved Jew* and *saved Gentile*?—C. M.

7.—Is not glorification an essential characteristic of those justified by faith, and confined to such—*not a necessary essential characteristic*—a difference existing between being *saved from* a state of condemnation, and being *saved to* a state of glory?—C. M.

8.—Will not the destiny of the *elect* saints differ from the destiny of the *saved* Jews and Gentiles? The former being described in Luke xx. 34—36, and the other in Ezek. xxxvii. 25. The one possessing no procreative power or capability of increase from within; while the other does possess it, as shown in the words, "Children and children's children."—C. M.

9.—Will not the original injunction given by God to Adam, "to multiply and *replenish* the earth," be thus accomplished, and the damage done by Satan fully repaired, bringing with it, in the glorified Church, a large accession

of compensation, so to speak, God for the great expenditure the gift of His Son?—C. M.

10.—Are not the blessings promised to the Jews entirely of worldly nature—except that one included in "the seed"—viz., numerous posterity, and possession of the land?—C. M.

11.—What is the precise meaning of the term "adoption," as employed by Paul in his epistles? How can "adoption" be reconciled with the "paternity of God?"

B. F.

12.—Can a pawnbroker be a Christian; and if he has mental qualifications for offices in the Church, will pawnbroking really be any moral injury to him in such offices? Again: Are we warranted in going to the old dispensation, or Jewish Law, in any way in reference to the subject of pawnbroking?—GEORGE STEVENS.

13.—"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father."—(John xx. 17.) How are we to understand these words? and can we discover any reason why the Saviour addressed *Mary Magdalene* thus? We do not read of such prohibition having been given to anyone else; and in one instance (eight days after) there is an express command to touch, for the purpose of inducing and strengthening belief, and that *before* the ascension (ver. 27). Could there have been an ascension to the Father, and a return to earth in the interim? Matthew also tells us (xxviii. 9) of some who, on the resurrection morning, met Jesus and "*held him by the feet as worshipped him*," an incident which appears to us, from comparing all the Gospels, to have occurred *before* the interview with *Mary Magdalene*; notwithstanding Mark speaks of that as His first appearance.—W. H. COLLIER.

## Literary Notices.

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Is it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the book to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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OF DIVINE THINGS. By the REV. WILLIAM NEWTON. London :  
Ston & Wright.

to us that the sermons of this age are formed on three very plans. The first plan is, to bring a number of ideas, to be in the Bible, into harmonious blending with some the-  
stem ; to run thoughts, professed to be got out of the  
into the Calvinistic, Arminian, or some other mould. Those  
use sermons on this plan, and they are perhaps the majority  
era, degrade the great Book of God by making it the organ  
poor human system of doctrine. Another plan is, to  
posed Biblical thoughts into harmony with the popular  
of the so-called religious world. These sermons are run in  
of the current religious sentiment. These are always the  
things. The people like them because they gratify their vanity  
g the crude things of their own nature. These sermons teach  
do nothing but gratify the self-esteem of thoughtless religion-  
d the church of the preacher, and bring financial help to "the  
Few things are greater curses to the world than such sermons.  
l plan is, to bring out, by diligent study and honest  
the thoughts of the Bible into vital contact with the common  
p spiritual wants, and every-day life of men, thus making "The  
ower to existing men and women. Such sermons, though  
very few, are, thank God ! increasing, and their increase is one  
t encouraging signs of the age. The discourses of Mr. Newton,  
"studies," as he wishes them called, belong to the last class.  
fifteen in number, and their subjects are fresh, various, and of  
est. These discourses are remarkably free from all common-  
hapodies, windy declamation, vulgar fineries, sentimental  
and such like. They are the productions of a man who has  
sought out the truth with his own eyes, felt it with his own

heart, and expresses it as it has shaped itself to him in his most earnestly-thinking, and profoundly-devout moods. The thoughts are life-thoughts; the spirit is chaste, catholic, reverential. The style is clear as crystal, often sparkling with the brightest rays of mind.

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**COUNSEL AND COMFORT SPOKEN FROM A CITY PULPIT.** By the author of "Recreations of a Country Parson." London: Strahan and Co.

THE subjects of this volume are:—"Thoughts on the Pulpit: Thankfulness: The Blessed Comforter: Man Come to Himself: The Well-grounded Hope: Nothing Without Christ: The Prospect Painful, yet Salutory: Departed Trouble and Welcome Rest: Continuance of the Tenets of Religious Profession: The Desire to be Remembered: The Redeemer's Errand to this World: Consequences: No More Pain: The Victory over the World: The Limits of Human Experience: The Personality and Agency of Evil Spirits: The Needfulness of Love to Christ." This work produced by the author of "Recreations of a Country Parson," is its ninth thousand, does not require us to characterize it, and is independent of our recommendation. A short extract from the introduction to the second discourse, on the text "Be ye thankful," we give as a specimen of the writer's style:—"There is a picturesque tract of the Western Highlands of Scotland, in passing through which, the traveller has to ascend a long, winding path, very steep, very rough, and very lonely, leading up a wild and desolate glen. The savage and swift grandeur of the scenery, with its bare hills and rocks, is hardly equalled in this country. But if the traveller goes up that glen on foot, and it is hardly possible to go up otherwise, his appreciation of the scene around him is gradually overborne by the sense of pure physical fatigue. He without a great strain upon limbs and heart, can that rugged way be traversed. At last you reach a ridge, whence the road descends steeply on the other side of the hill. You have ended your climbing, and you may now begin to go down again from whichever side you come. And there, at this summit, you will find a rude seat of stone, which bears the inscription, in deeply-cut letters, *Rest and be thankful.*"

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**THE SONGS OF THE TEMPLE PILGRIMS.** By ROBERT NISBET, D.D. London: James Nisbet & Co.

CONSIDERABLE speculation and discussion have prevailed, at different times, concerning that portion of Holy Writ called the Songs of Degrees. The author supposes them to refer to the stated journeys of the devout Jews up to the temple; and, looking at them in this light, they appear to him most "admirable manuals of instruction." "There is not," says he, "a chord to which the soul has ever vibrated that is not

taught in them. Here are the wail of sorrow, the earnestness of prayer, the glow of hope, the swell of gratitude, the exulting rapture of faith, the confidence and joy of love; confessions for our sins, lamentations for our weakness, high revelations for knowledge, blessed promises for hope, and noble resolutions of personal and household piety. It is the guide-book of God to His own presence; and the pilgrim to the Zion that is above cannot too frequently consult it." This book abounds with admirable thoughts bearing on experimental religion, expressed by many striking illustrations and much forceful language.

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UNKNOWN, APOSTOLIC AND MODERN. By FREDERIC W. BRIGGS. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

THIS volume is an exposition, with a practical intent, of the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles; which the author regards as a history, complete in itself, of missionary labors. "No part," says he, "of the important Book is of greater value to the Church, viewed as missionary agency. It is, in fact, a most impressive exhibition of missionary principles, in the order of their rapid manifestation, so that an exposition of this single history must be an exposition of all the great principles of missionary action." The purpose of the book is admirable, the execution is generally satisfactory, indicating critical acumen, honest research, and considerable reading. We can as cordially and for the same reasons commend this work to our readers, as we did his work on the 'Pentecost and the Founding of the Church.'

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NEW CRITICAL SCHOOL, AND JESUS CHRIST. By EDMUND DE PRESSENSÉ. (A reply to M. Renan's "Life of Jesus.") Translated by L. CORKRAN. London: Elliot Stock.

WE had hoped that M. Renan's "Life of Jesus" would have been allowed, with all its blasphemies, to have sunk into forgetfulness, so that its influence for evil might have been of the most limited character; but, as in the case of Colenso, scores of fifth-rate religious writers, desirous of distinguishing themselves in some way, seized it, brought out its errors before their readers, without the power, on their part, of giving such a view of Divine things as would throw the errors into the last degree of contempt. This little work of De Pressensé is, for many reasons, worth more than all we have seen as a refutation of this arch-heretic. De Pressensé is more than a match for Renan: his soul in every respect out-measures his. There is more penetration in his eye, more breadth in his span, more philosophy in his intellect, more poetry in his soul, more godliness in his being, more genius in his pen. Such are the men to deal with heretics.

**QUINT RESTING-PLACES, AND OTHER SERMONS. By ALEXANDER Canonbury. Edinburgh : Adam & Charles Black.**

THIS volume contains twenty-one discourses. The author's as a preacher is so high that we are not sure that these ascend anything to its elevation. The presence, the voice, the aid to the sermons of some preachers a power which can never be put to paper. "Their elastic and obedient words," to use the language of the author, "are cooled and hardened on the printed page." That in cases where the preacher has an unpleasant voice, an awkward action, and an ugly appearance, his sermon may be better as written productions than as oral utterances. Elsewhere, however, is not the case with the author in these discourses. His sermons gain neither beauty nor power by print. Albeit, in print they find their place amongst the peers, if not amongst the princes, in literature.

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**THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN IN NATURE, REVELATION, REAL LIFE. By THOMAS HUGHES. London : Hamilton, Adams & Co.**

MR. HUGHES is becoming a voluminous writer; but as his writings are not to the Smith and to the Winslow class, we feel no repugnance to his frequent appearance on the stage of literature. Far otherwise; of those thinking men whose words have always significance. This volume contains seven discourses, each of which is fraught with original thought and eloquent phrase.

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**THE HOLY BIBLE; containing the Old and New Testaments literally and idiomatically translated out of the Original Languages. By J. H. YOUNG. London and Edinburgh : A. Fullerton & Co.**

THIS work, we are informed, "in its present form," is not to be considered as intended to come into competition with the ordinary use of the commonly received English Version of the Holy Scriptures, but as strictly "literal and idiomatic" rendering of the original Hebrew and Greek texts. For about twenty years, fully half his lifetime, the translator has had a desire to execute such a work, and has been engaged in Biblical pursuits tending to this end more or less exclusively; and at last, in the good Providence of God, the desire has been accomplished. Amongst Biblical scholars there can, we think, be but one opinion of the remarkable ability with which Mr. Young has fulfilled his task. His translation more faithful to the original, we think, has never been attempted, and the advantage of such a work as this to the Biblical student is truly incalculable.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Man's Cry for a Solution of the Felt Distance of his Maker.

"Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?"—Psalm x. 1.

**H**AVING noticed in our last two discourses in this series, "Man's Cry for Fellowship with God," and "his Cry for a Knowledge of the Supreme Law of Life," we proceed now to notice the "his Cry for a solution of the felt Distance between him and his Maker." The passage I have read expresses the consciousness of such a distance. There are many other passages to the same effect. Thus, in Jeremiah we have these words:—"O, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turnest aside to tarry for a night?" The state of mind indicated in such language is more or less common to men in all ages and in all lands. What are all the sacrifices and rites of heathendom but an attempt to bridge the yawning chasm which the soul feels to lie between her and her Maker? There are seasons when this feeling becomes terribly strong and stirring in the soul. In the hour when affliction presses heavily on the heart, when danger looms darkly on the eye; when conviction stings the conscience, and the spirit trembles at the future—the cry is ever heard in some form or other, "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?" This cry—

First: Implies the belief that the distance is *unnatural*.



*Why?* It is not the original state of the soul. is not as it once was, not as it ought to be. Deep in the moral nature of man there is the feeling—the tender closeness, and intimate fellowship with his Great Father, is his normal state. He feels that to live evermore in His presence and in His love is his rightful destiny. Hence the “Why?” when the distance is felt. Why, O my Father, art Thou so far from Thy child, who feels that his position is only right and safe in close alliance with Thee.

Secondly: It implies the belief that the distance is *undesirable*. The cry means—We would not have Thee so far off. Distance from Thee we deprecate as an evil. It is a state of darkness and danger. Fellowship with Thee is happiness. Thy presence is the sunshine, the heaven of the soul. In it there is “fulness of joy.”

Now the question is, How can this *felt* distance be explained? Whence can we gain a solution of this spiritual phenomenon in human nature? There are *three* and *only* three sources which we can look to for light on the subject. There is—

I. HUMAN PHILOSOPHY. Speculation may theorize thus as to the cause of the felt distance—

First: *It may say that God is too great to allow man a close connexion with Him*; that it is derogatory to the infinite majesty of Him to whom the universe is as nothing, to suppose that He would permit individual souls an intimate alliance with Him. This old Epicurean idea has still a place in the brain of many a would-be sage. But no true thinker can accept the dogma as a truth, and therefore it cannot be received as an explanation.

Or speculation may say—

Secondly: *That the cause of the felt distance is God's method of agency*. That method, it is said, is *mediatory* and *uniform*. It is said that God does not deal *directly* with man, but indirectly. That He works behind the scene of *secondary causes*, and does not appear on the open platform directly to

e be admitted that the Eternal acts mediatorially, but no satisfactory explanation of this felt distance. *mediatorially in heaven*; and all there feel His, and, like Enoch, walk with Him.

*uniformity* of His operations may also be pleaded. proceeds on her course with an unbroken harmony, els run in a rut from which they swerve not from to century. In this scene of unchangeable order, man, ft to act out the spontaneous impulses of his nature. ses this, rejects that, pursues this course, and avoids s hither and thither, feels no coercion, is not conscious straining or constraining force. Because God does sionally break through this set order of things, and sly interfere with the free activities of man's being, distance, it may be said, exists. It is true that nature ously uniform, and man is consciously free, but this not the phenomenon; for nature in heaven is *uniform*, ts there are *free*, yet all there feel their *nearness* to God. er source to which we may look for an answer to tion is—

**SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY.** The explanation which human has given is this : That man, through his sins, has

placid into the furious; it is impossible. He is of mind, and no one can turn Him. The mind that sees things in their true light in one glance can have no succession of thought. And the heart that can never be affected with the external can experience no variation of feeling. "With Him there is no variableness."

It is not satisfactory—

Secondly : *Because it is inconsistent with the moral excellence of God.* We deem it an imperfection in man to indulge anger, and to act upon the principle, of resentment. A human father who withdraws in indignation from his son who has offended him, and holds no more communion with him, excites our censure rather than our praise. We feel that it is a far nobler thing to forgive an insult than to resent it—to overcome an enemy by kindness than to conquer him by wrath. Can what is unamiable with man be reconcilable with God? I trow not.

The other source to which we may look for an answer to this question is—

III. DIVINE REVELATION. How does the Bible account for this felt distance? Listen to its statements: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, and He will not hear." "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." "Alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works" (Col. i. 21.) The Bible everywhere represents sin as a forsaking of the Lord, as departing from Him, as a withdrawing away from His presence. The sinner is the prodigal son. The son departs from the father, not the father from the son.

This we hold to be, first, a *satisfactory solution*. It accounts for the feeling that man has, that God stands aloof from him. Outward objects are always to us according to the state of our minds in relation to them. Physically, the rising and the setting of the sun are nothing more than

relation of our bodies to the great orb of day. And, spiritually, the distance or nearness of God is determined by the state of our minds in relation to Him. Let us be guilty of a faithless act towards an old friend, and though he be ignorant of it, the next time we see him we shall feel that he is distant from us. The boy who has acted contrary to the expressed wish of a beloved father, will, until he is assured of forgiveness, feel that his father stands at a distance from him.

Nay, more; the consciousness of having done wrong towards a friend, will not only make us feel that that friend is distant from us, but is *indignant* with us. When we meet him after the offence has been committed, though he may be unconscious of the injury we have done him, and feel towards us all the love he had ever felt, yet looking at him through the medium of the sense of the wrong we have done him, we shall discover a coldness, if not anger, in his looks and words. This explains the sinner's feeling towards God, as a distant and angry Being. In reality God is near to him in every sense;—physically near: "In him he lives and has his being;"—relationally near: The tenderest of parents, the most absolute of proprietors, his very life;—sympathetically near: Loving him infinitely more than any other being has ever done or ever can do. Notwithstanding this, through the deep sense of his sin he feels that this most near Being is the most distant, that this most loving Being is the most indignant.

The Bible often presents God, as He *appears* to the mind of the sinner, just as it speaks of natural objects as they appear to our senses. What? it may be said, does the Bible speak of Him as jealous, full of indignation and wrath, and is He not so? Are we not bound to believe that He is in Himself what the Bible represents to Him be? In reply, we ask: Are we bound to believe that He has eyes, ears, hands, feet, head, back, nostrils, mouth—that He wears a crown, and drives a chariot of burning fire. Such representations are confessedly anthropomorphisms, condescensions to our modes of apprehension. No truth shines out on the face of the universe, radiates more clearly from God's Book, and is more congruous

with man's intuitive beliefs, than that fury is not i but that He is love. The atonement of Christ is cause, but the effect, the expression, the vehicle of the love of the Great Father towards His sinful c "Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that H us, and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our si

This we hold, secondly, to be a *vital solution*. The of the felt distance is essential to his well-being. Co nearness to God, as our loving Father, is the only of spirit. But a right knowledge of the cause of the c on our part would seem indispensable to its removal this knowledge—we have seen—the Bible, and the Bibl supplies. What a Book ! It knows our profi solicitudes, and matches the full measure of our want

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, and localities described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their v harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt des To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would b our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of i but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION SEVENTH.—Acts ii. 14—47.

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, unto them, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem known unto you, and hearken to my words : for these are not c as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. Bu that which was spoken by the prophet Joel ; And it shall come t the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all fi your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young n see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams : and on my and on my handmaidens I will pour our in those days of my Spi they shall prophesy : and I will shew wonders in heaven above, s

th; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun to darkness, and the moon into blood, before that day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God by signs and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, not seeing death: because it was not possible that he should be left in it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave me in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption: hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt give me with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me declare unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and seeing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the seed of David, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, saying, His soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption: God hath raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being at the right hand of God exalted, and having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into heaven, but he remaineth behind the throne of the Lord, saying unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard these things, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest, Men and brethren, what shall we do? &c.—

*Pentecost the culminating period in the system of Redemption.*

(Continued from page 72.)

already said that the Grand Epoch of the new divine economy was characterized by three manifestations of the Divine Spirit,—A new ministry, and—A new development of social

*life*. The first characteristic engaged our attention in *the* last section, and is developed in the first thirteen verses of the chapter. To the second, which is displayed from verses 14—37, we must now give ourselves.

II. A NEW ORDER OF RELIGIOUS MINISTRY. "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice," &c. The address, or, if you will, the sermon of Peter on this occasion, is something strikingly fresh in the history of preaching. There had been religious preaching before :—Moses preached, Joshua preached, prophets preached, John the Baptist preached, Christ preached, but this preaching of Peter was, in many respects, a new thing in the earth. The *occasion* was new. The spiritual excitement of the disciples, produced by Divine influence and leading to strange thoughts and miraculous utterances, which was the occasion of Peter's discourse, was something thoroughly new in the mental history of the world. The *substance* of his sermon was new. It was not a prophetic or a present, but a *historic* Christ,—a Christ who had been here and wrought miracles, had been crucified, had been buried, had risen from the dead to the throne of the universe. No one had ever preached Christ in this form before. It was Peter's honor to commence a new, but a permanent, form of religious ministry. The *impression* of his sermon was new. He convicted the multitude of having put to death their Messiah. This sermon worked a new and terrible feeling in human souls. "When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart."

Now, in analyzing so much of the discourse as we have recorded—for "*in many other words*" did he speak to them—we find it consist of three distinct parts,—*A statement for refuting the charge of the scoffer*,—*An argument for convicting the hearts of the hardened*, and—*An address for directing the conduct of the awakened*.

First : *Here is a statement for refuting the charge of the scoffer*. The charge of the scoffer was, that the wonderful excitement and the miraculous speech of the disciples were

the result of intoxication. "Others mocking said, These men are full of new (γλεύκους, *sweet*) wine." They, in the spirit of derision, ascribed the Divine thing to wickedness, as the Pharisees before had done, when they ascribed the miracles of Christ to Beelzebub. Detestable as is ever the spirit of ridicule and derision, and frivolous and impious as were the expressions of these empty mockers, their conduct gave occasion to this ever-memorable discourse of Peter. "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day." How true is this verse to what we know of Peter! How prompt his zeal! Though "the seven" stand up or step forth with him, he is the spokesman. Sooner does the impious aspersion of the scoffer fall on his ear, than his warm temper is up, and he is prompt to smother the upas in the germ. Nor does he speak in a whisper with bated breath; but "he lifted up his voice," raised, perhaps, to its highest notes, so that vast multitudes might hear his refutation of the calumny. He spoke not to the scoffers, but to the men of Judæa, and to all that dwelt at Jerusalem, whether they were Jews or proselytes. But the exordium shows that strong as was his zeal, it was, in this case, tempered by judgment. There is great rhetorical effect in his opening words. "*Be this known unto you, and hearken to my words.*" Thus he bespeaks attention with the skill and grace not unlike that with which Brutus, in Shakespeare, attempts to justify the death of Cæsar.

"Hear me for my cause, and be silent that you may hear."

His refutation consists of two parts, the negative and the affirmative. Let us notice each. (1) The negative. "*For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.*" This negative part, consisting of one short sentence, includes, it has been said, three distinguishable points. 1. *Categorical denial.* "These men are not drunken." An



*intimation of the groundlessness of the charge.* "As ye suppose." Intimating that it was a mere empty assumption, not a belief built on evidence. *An intimation of high improbability.* "Seeing it is but the third hour of the day." The "third hour" of the Jews would answer to our nine o'clock in the morning. The improbability of it would appear, perhaps, from two circumstances. It was the hour of morning worship and sacrifice, and it was a regular practice with the Jews not to eat or drink anything until after the third hour of the day. So established was this custom, that Paul tells us that it was not usual even for drunkards to become drunken in the daytime. "They that are drunken, become drunken in the night." Dr. Alexander thus paraphrases the sentence:—"As to the charge of drunkenness, it refutes itself; for unless you mean to class us with the lower revellers and debauchees, which all who see us see to be absurd, it is inconceivable that all of us should be already drunk at this early hour of the day." Methinks I see Peter directing, by his looks and his finger, the attention of his audience to the excited disciples on whom the Spirit of God had descended; and, with amazement mingled with holy indignation, exclaiming with emphasis, "*These are not drunken.*" Their radiant looks, their stately bearing, show that they are more like seraphs than drunkards. Let us notice now—

(2) *The positive part of the defence.* He now gives them the explanation of the phenomenon. He tells them that, so far from having to be ascribed to intoxicating drinks, it was the effect of Divine inspiration. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit: and they shall prophesy: and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke—the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into

before that great and notable day of the Lord come : shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." This passage is found in Joel 2:28—32 ; and Peter quotes it not with verbal accuracy from the Hebrew or Septuagint, but with substantial correctness. Peter here identifies the "last days" with that which had now commenced. In quoting the passage, the stolic orator seems to take it for granted that his hearers would understand that the "last days" meant the days of the Messiah, and that they regarded Joel as an authority. The days of the Messiah are indeed the days of the world. No other dispensation of mercy will there be. The passage teaches four things in relation to the "last days," the first of which had now dawned. (1) *It teaches that these "last days" would be connected with an extraordinary effusion of the Spirit.* "I will pour forth my Spirit upon all flesh," &c. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit during these days would not be limited to any particular persons—not limited to sex ; "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." Not limited to age ; "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream." The Spirit of the Lord enables men to see visions, and to speak out Divine things by prophecy. "They tell us what they see. Oh ! for more of this Spirit in the world now—a Spirit enabling all to see the true thing, and to speak it out. (2) *It teaches that these "last days" would be connected with prodigious revolutions.* "And I will send signs in heaven above, and signs in the earth below—blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke," &c. These may perhaps be properly regarded as a highly poetic representation of that revolution in governments, churches, and other human institutions which would inevitably follow the coming out of the Divine ideas and spiritual influences in the last days (Isa. xiii. 10 ; xxxiv. 4). (3) *It teaches that these "last days" would be connected with a notable day.* "In that great and notable day of the Lord come." The "notable day" refers most probably to the destruction

of Jerusalem by Titus. That was, indeed, a day of judgment to the Jewish people. "Their sun was turned into dark and their moon into blood." But there is another not day of the Lord, which lies at the end of "these last days" the day of Universal Judgment. (4) *It teaches these "last days" would be connected with a possibility of salvation to all who seek it.* "And it shall come to pass, whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. This is the most glorious characteristic of these "last days." Whosoever shall call—call in the true spirit of faithful Christ—"shall be saved." *Whosoever!* Thank Heaven this *whosoever*. Here is—

Secondly: *An argument for convicting the hearts of the hardened.* Peter passes from the groundless aspersion of the scoffer to deal more directly with the consciences of "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know," &c. The apostle sets himself to work of demonstrating that the Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, was the true Messiah, the Holy One, the Lord David, &c. He knew that if he could establish this to their conviction, he should rouse their consciences into agony of distress, and to this he gives himself; and his argument for the purpose, when closely examined, resolves itself into four facts.

(1) *That Jesus had wrought miracles before them while living.* "Jesus of Nazareth," says Peter, "a man approved of God among you by miracles and signs," &c. As the apostle had said, "Jesus of Nazareth, as you know Him with reproach and derision, did, as you well know, work miracles, wonders and signs amongst you. You cannot deny these works; they were so numerous, so extraordinary, seen so frequently by thousands in open places, that the denial of them by you is impossible. These miracles were God's attestation of His Messiahship, they were what God did by Him in the midst of you, 'as ye yourselves

17. He, that Nazarene, let me tell you, was a man from Jerusalem, attested by the wonders you saw Him work." Another part of this argument is—

1) *That His crucifixion by them was only the working out of the Divine plan.* "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The apostle might have been prompted to make this powerful statement to meet an objection that might possibly arise in their minds against the fact of His Messiahship. They might have said: "How could He, whom we had the power to bind and to loose, be the Messiah? Would the Great Jehovah deliver the Messiah, His Anointed One, to be thus crushed by wicked hands?" The objection would be natural, and the apostle's answer is equal to its triumphal refutation. He tells them that Jehovah delivered Him to them, "by his determinate counsel." He says virtually to them—"Your conduct towards Him of Nazareth, though free and terribly wicked, was the working out of the eternal plan of Heaven. Your conduct towards Him was the very conduct which Heaven determined should be permitted to pursue towards the Messiah on earth." So great is God, that He can make His greatest enemies, in working out their most hostile rebellions against Him, work out, at the same time, His great plans. He allows them to frustrate their own purposes, but fulfil His. The other part of his argument is—

2) *That His resurrection from the dead, which they could not deny, was a fact which accorded with their Scriptures.* "Whom God hath raised up," &c. He states this as a fact so generally admitted by them, as to require no single word in evidence. Who there, on that occasion, could deny, or even question the fact? It had only just occurred within a few weeks. It was fresh in the minds of the Jews, perhaps the one dominant thought, and the one prominent topic of conversation. He says, "whereof we all are witnesses." They were now standing near the very spot where it took place; there was lying the open grave before

them, where some had seen Him buried. It was unnecessary, therefore, for the apostle to spend one word in arguing the fact of His resurrection. He employs himself, therefore, in doing that which was required, and which was to the point, namely : to prove that the fact was in accordance with their own Scriptures. " Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him," &c.

In the quotation and use of this passage by the apostle, it is instructive to mark what he assumes, and what he attempts to prove. (1) He assumes that the document which he quotes will be admitted by them as of Divine authority. " For David speaketh," he says. He does not say a word to them as to who David was, there was no need for that ; no name in history was better known, no name gathered around it more loving and brilliant associations. Nor does he say a word as to the Divine authority of David's utterances. This would have been unnecessary. They regarded him as a man after God's own heart. They regarded him as inspired with the Spirit of God, as the consecrated organ of Heaven's thoughts to the world. There was nothing, therefore, debateable between him and his audience, as to the Divine authority of the document he quotes. (2) He takes for granted that the document refers to the resurrection of some one of distinguished excellence ; some one who is described as having " the Lord always before his face," " always on his right hand ;" as the " Holy One of God ;" this illustrious Some-One speaks with an exultant assurance of His own resurrection. " Therefore my heart was rejoiced, and my tongue was glad ; moreover, also, my flesh shall rest in hope." My flesh, my body, shall go down to the grave in a joyful hope of resurrection. He speaks of His soul, also, as not being left in hell (Hades, the world of separate souls). He expresses the assurance that it would not continue for ever separate from the body. Nay more, that the separation of His soul from the body would not be for long, not long enough for the body to " see corruption." " The ways of life " beyond the

grave were clearly revealed to Him by Heaven, and He anticipates the full joy of Jehovah's countenance. (3) He reasons that the resurrection of the Distinguished One predicted could not refer to David. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David." As if the apostle had said—"Men and brethren, give me your indulgence. Hear with patience and candor what I have yet to say, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, a man whom we all venerate, I as much as any of you:—he is not risen from the dead. He is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Yonder, on Mount Zion, with many of our great kings, his ashes sleep; the sepulchre in which his illustrious son Solomon buried him, with such pomp and splendor, is known and honored by us all. None of you believe that he has risen from the dead, for you regard him as sleeping there. His body has seen corruption, and his soul is yet in Hades. The resurrection, therefore, predicted in those passages I have quoted, and which you acknowledge to be Divine, could not be his resurrection." (4) He concludes that the resurrection predicted must have referred to Christ. "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

His conclusion that the Messiah is the One whose resurrection is predicted, is supported by the description which he here gives of the patriarch David. (1) David sustained the prophetic character. "Being a prophet." The Jews regarded David as one who had the Divine gift of prophecy. (2 Sam. xxiii. 2; Ps. xxii. 1, 8, 18; Ps. lxxix. 21, 25.) Being a prophet, and especially a prophet of the Messiah, it was in accordance with his character to foretell such an event. (2) David had the assurance that the Messiah would spring out of his loins. "Knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his

loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." God is in various places spoken of as having sworn to David. (Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4, 35, 36 ; Ps. cxxxii. 11. David, therefore, had the most settled assurance that from his seed the Messiah would spring. The Jews understood this. (Matt. xii. 22, 23 ; xxi. 9 ; xxii. 42—45.) It is natural to suppose, therefore, that a man like David, who was a prophet and who knew that the Messiah would descend from him, would, "seeing this before, speak of the resurrection of Christ," &c. Hence the conclusion of the apostle from the passage, that "this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

Another, and the last point of his argument in proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, was—(4) *The extraordinary spiritual phenomena which they now beheld in the disciples of Jesus.* The miraculous utterances, and the wonderful deportment of the disciples, which now attracted the multitudes to whom Peter spoke, established the same conclusion. It was the only explanation of the phenomena which astonished all: "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Jesus of Nazareth, whom they have crucified, had not only risen from the dead, but had ascended into heaven, and was at the right hand of God, the Lord of David, and the Lord of all, and according to His promise, had now sent down the Holy Spirit, filling the souls of His disciples with wondrous sentiments, and endowing them with miraculous speech. What they now saw and heard was a proof that He had ascended to Heaven, and His ascension to Heaven was a proof of His Messiahship. This is his argument for the Messiahship, which he proclaims as irresistible, and his audience felt it as such. "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know, assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." What a fact is this ! Wonderful in itself, and especially wonderful in its bearing on the men to whom it was now proclaimed ; and wonderful also for Peter to declare

an audience. What sublime intrepidity and invincible does he display in doing so. He, a poor fisherman, up before assembled thousands of his nation, and home upon them the enormous crime of crucifying saiah, their great hope as a people, whom David, ightiest monarch, predicted and adored as Lord, and l now ascended the throne of the universe. "God de that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both l Christ." Here is—

y: *An exhortation for directing the conduct of the*

l Peter's argument has succeeded in convicting. hen they heard this, they were pricked in their d said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, brethren, what shall we do?" The word translated icked" (*κατενύγησαν*) is only used here, and nowhere e New Testament. It denotes, to penetrate as with to pierce as with a sharp instrument. It answers rd compunction. It expresses an agony of being, nse and sudden. They had been convicted of an *Most guilty*. They had murdered the kindest, the he greatest of beings that ever appeared on earth— saiah, the Son of God, the Prince of Life. What in- , what injustice, what impiety, what rebellion, olved in their act! The sense of their guilt pierced v with the agony of *remorse* and *foreboding*. They convicted of an act—(2) *Most irreparable*. What done could not be undone. If they had merely in- rporal sufferings upon Him, those sufferings might a healed, and they might have restored Him; but killed Him. He was gone from them for ever. ld make no reparation. They had stained them- th a guilt that all the water of oceans could not

Hence their exclamation, "What shall we do? all we do? our moral anguish is intolerable, and our sions are most terrible; our moral heavens are th clouds that threaten a terrible tempest."

to this appeal, Peter, with characteristic promptness,



responds. Though the convicted hearers appeal not only to Peter, but to the "rest of the apostles," Peter is the spokesman and here is his address:—"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

In this exhortation of his, three things are observed:—  
 (1) *He directs them to the only blessings that could be theirs in their case.* These blessings are the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, which means, *Divine pardon* and *Divine influence*. They needed *remission of sins*. "The first Greek noun," says Alexander, "(ἀφεσις)" derived from a verb (ἀφίημι) which means, to let go, is applied by Plutarch, to divorce; by Demosthenes, to legal discharge from the obligation of a bond; by Plato, to the emancipation of a slave, and to exemption from punishment; which has its constant use in the New Testament. The whole phrase *to (or towards) remission of sins*, describes this as the end to which the question of the multitude had reference, to which, therefore, must be contemplated also in the answer. To freedom from punishment he directs them, as he who directs shipwrecked mariners, struggling in the billows and about to sink, to the approaching life-boat bounding over the crested waves. But they needed not only Divine pardon but Divine influence; not only the remission of sins, but the *gift of the Holy Ghost*. They would require this Spirit to enable them to remove all the sad effects of sin from their nature, to guide them rightly in their future course, and to strengthen them evermore to resist the wrong and pursue the right. These two things, the Divine pardon and the Divine Spirit, are essential to the salvation of our fallen world. To these, therefore, Peter directs his sin-convicted hearers.

(2) *He directs them to the course of conduct essential to the attainment of those blessings.* He knew that t

blessings would not come to them except they, as moral agents, exerted those powers with which they were endowed in a way suitable to the end ; and hence he directs them to repentance and baptism. "Repent, and be baptized," &c. If the baptism here is a baptism of water, in those two things we find, first, an internal effort involving a renunciation of evil, and the second, an external effort involving the expression of that renunciation. *Repentance* is the internal effort involving the renunciation of evil. The word "repent," which etymologically and at first meant after-thought and reflection, means in the New Testament sense, a moral change of mind—a thorough revolution in character. This revolution implies great internal effort on man's part. It is not a something imparted from without, it is something produced within. It implies profound reflection upon our conduct, renunciation of the evil connected with it, and a determination in future to pursue a holier course. *Baptism* is an external effort involving the expression of that renunciation. Peter does not explain to these men what baptism was. They, being Jews, knew its meaning well. They knew it as revealed in the Levitical system ; they knew it as it had been just applied to them by John the Baptist on the banks of the Jordan ; and by the disciples of Jesus who baptized even more than John. They knew that it was a symbol of spiritual cleansing. The language of Peter, perhaps, taken as a whole would mean, "be cleansed from your sins within by repentance, and symbolically express that cleansing by being baptized in the name of Jesus."

John the Baptist had predicted, in connexion with Christ's mission, a baptism of the Spirit. "I indeed," said John, "baptize you with water ; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." And Jesus Himself, just before He left the world, promised this baptism of the Spirit. "For John truly baptized with water ; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." This baptism of the Spirit—a baptism that cleanses

the soul from all moral impurities—is, after all, the essential thing; a baptism this, of which water-baptism is at the best but a symbol, and without which it is but an impious show.

(3) *He directs them to the gracious promise of Heaven and encourages them in the course of conduct required.* “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” The promise he here points to, is that which he held forth to the multitude in the preceding verse, the promise of the Holy Ghost. This promise he had referred to in the introduction of his discourse, when he quoted the words of Joel: “I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh,” &c. This promise he assures them was for *them* and their *posterity*, “you and your children.” To *you*, bad as you are,—you that spat in his face, you that derided Him, you that plaited the crown of thorns, you that placed it on His bleeding brow, you that put on Him the purple robe of mock royalty, you that rent the heavens with the cry “away with him, away with him,” you that railed at Him when He hung upon the cross, you that gave Him gall to quench His burning thirst—the promise is to *you*. “*Every one of you.*” “What a blessed every one of you is here,” says Bunyan. “To your *children.*” To your posterity down to the latest period of time, it shall echo from the ear and shine on the face of “the last of Adam’s race.” To those *here*, and to those *everywhere*. “To those that are afar off.” Not only to Jews who were scattered in different countries, but to Gentiles also. To men on every zone of the globe. “*To all that the Lord our God shall call.*” To whom does He not call? His words are gone out to all the earth. His call in the Gospel is to all. Blessed promise this. It is a rainbow that encircles the world. It reflects the rays of the upper heavens, and heralds universal sunshine for the race.

Such is the substance of the apostle’s wonderful Sermon. We say substance, for the whole is not here. We are told that “with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

*saved* from the sins of a crooked generation. Does not this new order of religious ministry, now inaugurated by Peter, stand in sublime and censoring contrast to much of the ministry that is called "Evangelical" in these days? It has none of the dogmas that form the staple ministry of many pulpits now. There is nothing here about the election of some and the reprobation of others. Nothing here about the final perseverance of the saints, nothing here about a forensic justification. No theory of the atonement is propounded here. Nothing is here about the moral ability or inability of the sinner. No metaphysical theologizings of any kind are here. CHRIST, in His relation to the men and women, the good and bad, who stood before him, was the grand theme of Peter's discourse. As a speaker he steps forth with a distinct object in view, namely, the awakening the souls of the multitude to a true sense of their sin, and he employs an argument most philosophically suited to gain his end; it was an argument to convince them that they had murdered their Messiah. He understands the subject thoroughly; he feels it profoundly; and he speaks it with all earnestness and point. There is no attempt to be smart, or quaint, elegant, or grand in his speech. Such things, with ranting declamations, and oratorical flourishes, suit the hollow-hearted, self-seeking demagogue, but are ever revolting to a soul in genuine earnest. His words were few, clear, direct, arranged with logical skill, and uttered with a voice intoned by the Spirit of the Living God.

*(To be continued.)*



# Gems of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*Jacob's Death-bed.*

"All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that thy father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them. And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession for a buryingplace. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."—Gen. xlix. 28—33.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-second.*

**T**HIS is a brief, simple, and touching record of the death of a man, who, notwithstanding his many glaring imperfections of character, occupied a position in the world's history and displayed qualities of excellence which attract to him the thoughts of the devout in all subsequent times. He stands as one of the grand mountains in the landscape of history, rugged, deformed and hideous in many a part, it is true, still studded along its slopes with many spots of refreshing loveliness.

The account which he gave of his own life, when an old man, to Egypt's proud despot, was sadly affecting and significant. Jacob said unto Pharaoh, "the days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years, few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." "Few and evil" are weighty words that characterize with greater or less accuracy the life days of all. *Shortness and sadness* mark our sojourn here. The last day of Jacob's life has a

dawned, and the last hours are about striking. He is on his death-bed, and it is in this posture we have to study him now.

Three things deserve our attention :—*His affection for the living ; His sympathy with the dead ; His magnanimity in all,*

I. HIS AFFECTION FOR THE LIVING. From his death-bed he sends a summons to all his children to attend—"and Jacob called unto his sons and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." While all are around him, he speaks to each in the presence of all ; some he reproves for their faults, others he commends for their virtues, and with the spirit of prophecy upon him, he foretells with remarkable accuracy the place that each should hold in the world's history.

After this he blesses them all. "He spake unto them, and blessed them ; every one according to his blessing he blessed them." The particular blessings he pronounced upon each we know not ; we may rest assured, however, that they were all of a *spiritual* character. We may rest assured that the dying patriarch commended each to the loving guidance of the Everlasting Father. Two things are noteworthy concerning the parental affection which expresses itself now on his death-bed.

First : *His affection was impartial.* He gathered them all together ; the twelve were there. To each he spoke, and for each he craved a blessing. He had, as a father, before been guilty of partiality, (Gen. xxxvii. 3,) which led to serious evils in his family, and brought grief to his old age ; but he does not show that now. To love all alike where the degrees of character were so dissimilar, would be impossible, yet on this occasion he feels and shows an equal interest in the well-being of each of his offspring. He exhibits no parental favoritism now. Such favoritism is an evil which parents should ever be careful to avoid.

Secondly : *His affection was religious.* "He blessed them ;" by which we understand that he invoked the benediction of God upon them. Their spiritual and eternal happiness was

undoubtedly the strongest wish of his love. This *should* always be the strongest wish of parental love. The parent whose strongest wish for his children is mere secular prosperity, desecrates the parental instinct. He who breathes into the spirit of his child the quickening thoughts of religion, confers a boon on him infinitely greater than if he bequeathed to him the greatest empire on which the sun ever shone: His death-bed exhibits—

II. SYMPATHY WITH THE DEAD. This is expressed in his request concerning his burial. "He charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah," &c. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and Leah, all of whom were in the grave, he felt a loving interest in now. We cannot divest our minds of the idea of consciousness, when thinking of the grave; hence we talk of the dark grave, the cold grave, &c. An American Indian, on seeing his brother's corpse lowered into a grave with snow at the bottom, is said to have exclaimed with horror at the sight: "Oh lay him not in the cold snow." A natural feeling this, though reason may denounce it. This feeling which Jacob now expresses concerning his burial, suggests two things—

First: *That there is something in man stronger than logic.* There is nothing in reason to warrant this wish of Jacob's. Reason would say, "It matters not where you are buried, at home or abroad, amongst friends or foes, in the caverns of the earth or in the abysses of the sea, for your corpse will not be conscious of its resting-place;" still the heart says, "Bury me here or there, with these or those." I would not disparage reason, but it is well for us to remember, especially in an age when men are disposed to deify intellect, that there is something in man deeper and stronger than all the deductions of reason. For example, (1) The sentiment of immortality in man is stronger than reason. The intellect often denies it, where the heart holds it with tenacity.

(2) The sentiment of responsibility is stronger than reason. Intellect often argues man into an irresponsible machine, where the heart groans under a sense of its accountability. Herod is an illustration of this. (3) The sentiment of a God is stronger than reason. Intellect has often argued God out of an existence when the heart has cried to Him in distress. Volding in the storm is an illustration of this. This feeling of Jacob's suggests—

Secondly : *That the dead exert a powerful influence upon the living.* Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, were names acting with power upon the heart of Jacob now. It is ever so. Thousands that are in their graves to-day are working in the memories of the living, and producing great effects. The grave confines not our influence. There are men who have long since mouldered to ashes, with whose names we may electrify a nation, and thrill the world. The dead rule the living. His death-bed exhibits—

III. HIS MAGNANIMITY IN ALL. How sublimely calm he seems as he lies on that bed. There is no perturbation. He is on the banks of the Jordan, and the cold stream has reached his feet, and is swelling around him, but he has no spiritual shivering, no fear ripples his nature ; all is calm ; he has finished his work, and he is ready to be gone. "When Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." He adjusts his body and lays him down to sleep. Two things alone can explain this calmness.

First : *Faith in his future existence.* Had the idea of annihilation seized him, would he have been calm ? Would not a mere doubt about a future life have disturbed him ? The eternal laws of human nature prevent it from committing itself with composure to annihilation. Jacob believed that he should live.

Secondly : *Faith in the happiness of his future existence.* Had he believed in a future existence, and regarded that exist-



once to be one of misery, he could not have been calm. The prospect of misery disturbs. But he felt that all was right with him in the future, that his peace was made with God, and that he was going to join the spirits of those with whose dust he wished his own body to sleep.

Brothers, in retiring from this death-bed, let us remember that the event we have witnessed is one which none can escape. We must all die. The hour hastens, when we, like Jacob, shall gather up these limbs and adjust them in their final posture. Let us, as parents, bear away with us the memory of Jacob's conduct towards his children, as an example for our imitation, and let us resolve to seek with renewed earnestness that faith by which the patriarch discharged the duties, and met the solemnities of the final hour, with such heroic calmness.



SUBJECT:—*The True Foundation of Character.*

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."—1 Cor. iii. 11—15.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-third.*

**N**OTHING is so important to man as his moral character.

(1) It is that alone which he can call his own. He has produced it, no one else. (2) It is that alone which determines his real worth. As is his character, so is he before God and the universe. (3) It is that alone which decides his destiny. Out of it will bloom his Eden or flame his Hell. (4) It is that alone which he carries with him beyond the grave. Friends, property, and even his own

body he leaves behind, but character he bears with him into the vast unknown. The passage suggests certain important thoughts concerning character.

I. THAT THERE IS AN ANALOGY BETWEEN THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER AND THE ERECTION OF A BUILDING. "If any man build, &c." The process of character-forming is spoken of in the Bible sometimes under the figure of a journey, sometimes under the figure of a battle, sometimes under the figure of tillage. Here it is spoken of under the figure of a building. It is like a building in three respects.

First : *In the variety of its materials.* Buildings are generally formed, not of one material, but of several. "Stone, wood, iron," &c. Moral character is built up by a great variety of things :—the impressions that are made on us ; the emotions that rise in us ; the thoughts that possess us ; the volitions we pass ; all, in fact, that in any way affects us, goes to construct this character.

Secondly : *In the unity of its design.* Every building, however varied its materials, is formed on some plan. One design shapes the whole. So with character. The master-purpose of the soul—and every man has a master-purpose—whatever it may be, gives unity to the whole.

Thirdly : *In the function it fulfils.* Buildings are generally residences of some kind or other. The soul lives in the character. It is its home. In some cases the home is the mere sty of the animal ; in some, the shop of the barterer ; in some, the prison of the guilty ; in some, the temple of the saint.

II. THAT CHRIST IS THE ONLY FOUNDATION OF A TRUE CHARACTER. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." There are sometimes splendid edifices and poor foundations, and the reverse. All characters are based upon some one idea.

First : *Some are based on the sensual idea* :—Such as that on which the prodigal son started ;—Such as that on which

Dives built his all. Millions now do the same. What shall we eat, what shall we drink? is the grand inquiry.

Secondly: *Some are based on the secular idea.* On this Judas, the young lawyer, and Demas built; and on this thousands build now.

Thirdly: *Some are based on the ambitious idea.* Absalom, Haman, Herod, are examples of this. Such, too, are the Alexanders and Napoleons of general history.

Fourthly: *Some are based on the Christian idea.* What is that? Supreme sympathy with God; and this requires Christ for its existence. It cannot exist without Christ. Christ is its foundation, for He does the two things to generate the supreme sympathy in souls. (1) Demonstrates to man the propitiableness of God. (2) Reveals to man the moral loveliness of God. Thus He is the true foundation.

III. THAT TO CHRIST AS A FOUNDATION MEN BRING WORTHLESS AS WELL AS VALUABLE MATERIALS. "Some build edifices of gold, silver, precious stones," and some "wood, hay, stubble."

First: *There are edifices partially formed of "wood, hay, stubble."* The mere *creedal* character is worthless. There are those whose Christianity is a mere matter of creed, a thing of idea, nothing more. Mere *sentimental* character is worthless. There are those whose Christianity is a mere matter of feeling, a thing of frames and feelings. Mere *ritualistic* character is worthless. There are those whose Christianity is a mere matter of form. All these characters are formed of "wood, hay, stubble;" things of no solidity, no value, no duration.

Secondly: *There are edifices entirely formed of valuable materials brought to Christ.* They are formed of "gold, silver, precious stones." The heart is in vital sympathy with Christ, as the Atoner for sin, the Exemplar of holiness, the Saviour of the world. The profoundest thoughts, the strongest sympathies, the gold and silver of the soul, are connected with Christ.

IV. THAT THERE IS AN ERA TO DAWN WHEN ALL THE EDIFICES BUILT ON THIS FOUNDATION SHALL BE TRIED. "Every man's work shall be made manifest." *The day.* Heaven has appointed a day for testing character. Individually, it is the day that dawns at the end of our mortal life. Universally, it is the day that dawns at the end of this world's history. This will be a day of *fire*. The fire of absolute justice and truth will burn to the centre of all souls, consuming all that is worthless.

First : *This day will be injurious to those who have built on this foundation with worthless materials.* (1) They will suffer loss. There will be the loss of labor, the loss of opportunity, the loss of position. (2) Though they suffer loss they may be saved. "Saved, yet so as by fire." Though his favorite theories and cherished hopes shall burn like wood and hay, yet he himself may survive the flames.

Secondly : *This day will be advantageous to those who have built on this foundation with right materials.* "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon he shall receive a reward."

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SUBJECT :— *Man, a Stranger on Earth.*

"I am a stranger in the earth."—Psalm cxix. 19.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-fourth.

**T**HOUGH he who first uttered these words was in a land very distant, an age very remote, and circumstances very unlike ours, there is such a similarity in human experiences, such a oneness of the human heart, that each one of us may find this language intensely true as describing himself. There are many things that impress us with the fact, and induce in us the conviction that we are strangers here :—*The continual discoveries of science.* In the different regions that she treads, science is constantly revealing to us facts of which we have been completely ignorant, or showing

us fresh applications of facts that have scarcely been dreamed of before. The earth is a vast museum, and every fresh teaching of the sciences reminds us that we have explored such a fraction of its untold wonders, have become familiar with so little of its contents, in fact have merely touched so few of the objects of study that are piled about us, or spread around us, that each of us is compelled to say, "I am a stranger in the earth." This we also learn from our *personal bodily ailments*. Few are long free from such suggestive intimations of mortality as are afforded by pain, and disease, and weakness of body. This body of ours is as the tent of the pilgrim; and in our various physical infirmities, it is as though the winds were blowing, and the storms beating upon that frail tent, loosening its cords, tearing its canvas, shaking its supports, and foreboding a fast-approaching and complete destruction. Our *social intercourse*, too, teaches us the truth of the text. How *limited* it is. There are millions of human beings we have never seen, and thousands whom we see of whom we know nothing. We are as "strangers" in a vast crowd, among the population of the earth. How *changeable*, too. We are constantly missing some and meeting others. And with the saddest voice of all, our text is confirmed by *the bereavements of affection*. The empty chair in the home, the hollow chamber in the heart, lead many a widow, and fatherless, and forsaken one to feel they are "strangers" here. The fact is—

I. A REASON FOR HUMILITY WITH REGARD TO THE GREAT PROBLEMS OF LIFE. Such awful questions as—Why am I here? Whither am I going? Whence all this sin? Wherefore all this wretchedness?—press with overwhelming force on us in our thoughtful hours. Let us, in grappling with them, in struggling for their solution, cherish the spirit of the text. Many things here are so startlingly strange to us because we are such strangers. If there is much mystery in them, there is more ignorance in us. So, let us reverently submit to Him who alone of all Beings is no stranger. Hear with

humble faith the oracles of Him to whom the ages are but as a moment, the universe a point. No man can be arrogant, dogmatic, or proud in spirit, who confesses—"I am a stranger," &c.

II. A REASON FOR DILIGENCE WITH REGARD TO THE DUTIES OF LIFE. Not with the leisure of the peasant whose home is on the Alps, but with the alacrity of the stranger there: nor even with the ordinary industry of the inhabitant of a city, but with the earnest diligence of the stranger there, must we conduct our life here. The wise man felt that we were strangers here, all hurrying on to a place whence we should no more return; and therefore he said—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," &c. The duties with regard to our own souls, our families, our neighbourhood, that are incumbent upon us, should be speedily discharged. If we were going to stay here for ever, the sloth of the self-indulgent, the neglect of the callous, or at least the procrastination of the sentimental, might find some excuse. But the true Christian is only he who lives with the eagerness of the pilgrim's life.

III. A REASON FOR MODERATION IN OUR INTEREST IN LIFE. Whilst there is a deep sense in which we cannot set too high a value on our life here, it is also true that there is great and insidious danger of our centering too much of our affection on the properties, the pursuits, the connexions, the homes of this world. As the stranger, even amid fairest landscapes and most congenial scenes, remembers his home and for it reserves his strongest interest and to it consecrates his deepest love, the Christian also will ever feel,

"Here in the body pent,  
Absent from thee I roam,  
And nightly pitch my roving tent  
A day's march nearer Home."

The spirit of our text is a sure deliverance from excessive

grief and from immoderate joy ; it is an aid to the Christian virtue of patience and soberness.

IV. A REASON FOR PRESUMING THE EXISTENCE OF SOME ABIDING STATE. Thoughtful souls in pagan countries and heathen lands, share with us and with the ancient Hebrew the conviction of the text. And this wide unsatisfaction with things temporal, this almost universal craving for a land where we shall not be strangers, is a very strong argument for its existence. It would indeed be a sad, an appalling truth, if all the great souls who have felt life to be only a journey, or a voyage, should after all never reach any haven or home. If there be no land where we shall be strangers no longer, man's hopes are grander than God's plans, man's cravings vaster than God's provisions. But not those who have lived the devoutest lives, have been taught to feel even more profoundly than the worldly man, "I am a stranger in the earth ;" and religion has made this sad unrest and earnest expectation of our life here, a prophecy and a pledge of "a continuing city."

V. A REASON FOR OUR SEEKING THE RIGHT GUIDE OF LIFE. The musing evidently led the Psalmist to this conclusion, for the remainder of the verse is a prayer :—"Hide not thy commandments from me." As though he said, "I am a stranger in the earth," have so recently come hither, and know so little of all life's mysteries ; am so soon going hence and know so little of all my destiny—that I need with an overwhelming urgency, instruction and guidance. And more than that, all men around me are strangers, too. I must have higher wisdom than that of earth." Hence, to God he looked, on His commandments he rested. This need we feel not less than the Psalmist. Because we are such strangers here, well may we, imploringly, and, thank God, also confidently cry, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

*Bristol.*

U. R. THOMAS

SUBJECT:—*The Value of Religion.*

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field," &c.—  
Matt. xiii. 44.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-fifth.

**W**ELL we may say concerning Jesus, "No man spake like this man." He was the Great Teacher of mankind, a Teacher come from heaven, sent by God, to instruct men in the way of holiness, to teach them momentous truths, and to recommend to their affections the infinitely valuable pearl of personal godliness. His teaching is characterized by infinite wisdom, the most heart-melting tenderness, and the most urgent and forcible persuasiveness. He employs the most striking metaphors, the most happy similes, and the most powerful motives to press mankind to choose the good part, which shall not be taken away from them. The words of the text form a striking illustration of the sentiment advanced. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field," &c. To see the beauty and force of this parable, picture to your own mind all the objects mentioned therein: a field—a valuable treasure hid there by some person, perhaps in the time of war, or pestilence, when the possessor was compelled to leave his land, expecting at the time of his much wished and longed-for returning, to find his treasure where it was placed for security's sake. Meanwhile, whilst he was perhaps an exile in a foreign land, or dropped to the regions of mortality—a stranger comes, perchance, and finds the treasure, and rejoices because of the discovery. Imagine the feelings of his heart. Oh, enough for myself and family, if I could but secure this treasure: then, lest any one should find it, and take it away, after seeing its value, he takes every imaginable care to conceal the discovery till he sells all his property, and goes and buys the field—then he lives upon it. This is the literal meaning presented by the parable; and some important lessons are to be had from it, which are—



I. THAT RELIGION IS VALUABLE. "A treasure." If we were to realize the heavenly emotions, the grateful feelings, the tranquil state, and the lofty and cheering prospects of the Christian mind, we should pronounce religion to be precious. If we were to gaze on the happy scene and listen to the religious conversation of a Christian family, we would say religion is precious. But passing the temporal amelioration of the world, and the moral beauty with which it adorns the national character of every Christian land, by the telescope of Divine truth, let us view the ineffable beauty and eternal grandeur of the paradise of God, and consider that religion brings *man! man!* thither, and we shall say that religion is precious. But there are three things which renders an object precious—

First: *Its intrinsic value.* When we look at some stupendous building or some extraordinary work of art, such as the Britannia Bridge, the Crystal Palace, the Great Eastern, &c., we pronounce them precious, because their intrinsic value or the expense incurred in their construction, is immense. Look at the expense of Deity in bringing salvation to man; He created with a word, He rules with ease, but redeems man with agony.

Secondly: *The universal consent concerning it.* It is the common consent of mankind that made the gold-dust of greater value than some other dust. But apply this to religion. All beings in the universe, with the exception of some wicked men on earth and the lost angels—and they soon will give in and confess the value of religion—have consented that religion is the chief thing—it passes so in every country.

Thirdly: *Its adaptation to answer some great and important purposes.* We can easily conceive of gold and silver, a pearl or a diamond, being of no greater value in the sight of man than the dust on which he treads. Suppose a man cast upon a strange island, where he has no intercourse with his fellow-men—a morsel of bread would be better to him than a mountain of gold, and a drop of water

than a houseful of pearls. Even paper, when it gains currency in the commercial world as money, becomes valuable. Everything around us, such as air, water, which is absolutely necessary for sustaining life, is precious. Suppose a man on the point of being drowned in a wreck. Cast gold at him, he despises it; bring luxury to him, he turns from it; but bring him a *boat*. Religion *only* is adapted to man's necessities, and it alone will rescue his soul from death, &c.

II. THAT THE VALUE OF RELIGION IS UNKNOWN TO THE MASS OF MANKIND. It is a treasure "hid" to them. The common pursuits of mankind are a practical proof of this. Men are engaged with the greatest earnestness and zeal in accumulating wealth, in forming friendship, and in obtaining honor. They devote their whole energy, talent and time to the world, and dedicate their existence to mammon, whilst they entirely disregard the pearl of great price. Why is this? What can account for this? It is their ignorance of the preciousness of religion. Since there is so much preaching, so much explaining Scripture, how is it that men are so ignorant of the true value of religion?

First: *Because of their carelessness in not examining it.* See its bearings, enjoyments, prospects. Moses examined it and found its value, and so would everyone were he to examine it.

Secondly: *Because of the spirituality of its nature.* If the things of this world, if wealth and honor were offered to men on the same terms as the spiritual blessings of the Gospel are pressed upon them, they would receive such a ministry, and press for the benefits offered. But they turn a deaf ear to the invitations of the Gospel. The natural man does not discern spiritual things.

Thirdly: *Because her charms are derived from futurity.* Her rewards, her prospects, her bliss, are future, not present.

III. THE GREAT REGARD PAID TO RELIGION BY THE CHRISTIAN. "For joy thereof," &c.

First: *Great anxiety*. He hides it, anxious lest it be lost. This he does for three reasons: he will have enough to live on, if he could but secure the treasure, enough for ever. His conduct shows the possibility of losing it. If we lose the treasure of personal piety in this world, it will be lost for ever.

Secondly: *Great joy*. A treasure is hid in the field, more than he expected; he had walked over the field many a time before, but never thought it so precious. It may be *his*, all may be his. All-absorbing subject! Where the treasure is, there the heart.

Thirdly: *Great sacrifice*. "He selleth all" in order to buy it. This includes three things. An entire renunciation of self-righteousness. Breaking the connexion with every sin, though it be dear and profitable: Matt v. 29, 30. A thing that is sold has no further connexion with its previous owner, he has done with it.

*Tredegar, Mon.*

DAVID HUGHES, B.A.

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## Biblical Criticism.

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### THE CODEX SINAITICUS.

THE manuscript is written on very fine vellum. The page is  $13\frac{1}{2}$  inches broad, by about 15 inches high; and the number of leaves is  $345\frac{1}{2}$ . The letters are uncial, and closely resemble the style of existing writing of the first century. The lines are so short that there are four columns on every page, the writing being what is termed *stichometrical*. Where several particulars are recounted, as in Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39, there is often only one word to a line. The manuscript is evidently a close copy of another similarly written, since lines are sometimes omitted, and clauses which happen to end with the same words as those which precede. Thus the sense is often destroyed. In the opinion of

Tischendorf—which, however, is not shared by Tregelles—the manuscript is the work of several, at least of four, different scribes. At various periods it seems to have been subjected to the corrections of various revisers, whose writing, in many different hands, abounds in the Codex, and certainly not to the improvement of its appearance. Sometimes corrections are themselves corrected; and sometimes the original writing, where the ink has faded through age, has been renovated by retracing the strokes. One of the correctors has occasionally put in the margin, over against passages which he particularly admired, the syllable *ωρ* for *ωραϊον*, beautiful.

It is curious that in this Codex the Acts follows the Pauline Epistles, and the Epistle to the Hebrews precedes the Epistles to Timothy.

Palæographers who are qualified to pronounce an authoritative opinion, declare their conviction of the extreme antiquity of this manuscript. This opinion is based on reasons such as the following :—

The quality and venerable appearance of the vellum.

The number of columns on the open leaf, as if indicating a transition from the old *volumes* or *rolled* books.

The ancient form of the characters, and the absence of large letters at the beginning of sentences.

The brevity of the titles and subscriptions.

The presence in the Gospels of the Ammonian Sections, called Ammonian because attributed by Wetstein to Ammonius Saccas,\* and of the Eusebian Canons, which are harmonistic tabular arrangements; these Sections and Canons being marked in red ink in the margin, and the marks evidently contemporary with the original scribe.

The presence of the works of Barnabas and Hermas, which seems to refer the manuscript to a period when the Church had not settled the Canon of Scripture.

The numerous corrections by different hands in different ages, and of various shades of ink, above described.

\* Century 3rd.

Lastly, and above all, the readings which are peculiar to the text of this Codex.

The following is part of a letter which Tischendorf received from the Pope in the spring of 1862 :—

"We do not doubt that your researches and labours are destined to be of great value to scholars of the Catholic persuasion, as you are enriching the sacred sciences with new treasures. We congratulate you that the celebrity you deservedly enjoy has been still more increased by this new work, especially as your noble sentiments separate you very widely from those who, as you have well remarked, rejoice in their contempt for religion, over the shipwreck of faith, the decay of Christianity."

Another autograph letter from the same personage, was received by Tischendorf towards the close of last year :—

"Illustrious Sir, our greetings! That splendid edition of the Sinaitic Manuscript which you have executed with such vast labor and study, illustrious sir, has, as you conjectured, been brought to us by the Ambassador of his Imperial Majesty, and soon afterwards your letter came to us, together with the manual edition of the New Testament, which you sent us as a present. Although it belongs to the very character of so great a work that it can be fully comprehended only by means of the thoroughest and most searching examination (which our manifold and important duties do not permit us), yet all that we saw at the first glance into the work has filled us with admiration. We have especially remarked the extraordinary zeal with which, as if with a view to spread the leaves of the old parchment itself before everyone's eyes, you have reproduced it so carefully page by page, according to the several columns of the text, every verse, the interpunctuations, and the spaces between the lines, the zeal with which you have so adroitly imitated by type the form and size of all the various letters; and with which, finally, you have not only distinguished from one another all the old corrections in the writing, but also compared them with the chief text itself. All this puts everyone, without seeing the original, in the position to judge of the value and age of the document, at the same time that it realises to everyone that conscientiousness and enormous labour with which you have called up this extraordinary manuscript into new life after it had so long lain hidden. Verily, the glory you possessed already in this branch of science has been crowned by this last work, not less on account of its difficulty and magnitude than by reason of its importance. For not only does this Sinaitic Codex present a great part of the Old Testament and the whole of the New, which was not completely contained

even in the Vatican Codex, but it contains besides the writings known under the name of Barnabas, which hitherto had been published only partly and defectively, and the first part of "The Shepherd"—writings which are indeed to be highly prized. O that the fruits of so many travels, researches, labours, which you have cheerfully taken upon yourself, and happily executed, may especially, as you yourself say, help the advance of Christian knowledge, not only of the whole of Christendom, but may also draw upon you in such rich measure the favour of God, that we may finally be able to embrace you as a dearest son, bound with us by the bonds of perfect love. This we beseech of God for you, illustrious sir, while we express our gratitude to you, and assure you of our high esteem.—Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, September 2, 1863, in the eighteenth year of our Pontificate. "PIUS P.P. IX."

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## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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### *Easter Day.*

"The power of his resurrection."—Phil. iii. 10.

ALTHOUGH the word *power* (*δύναμις*) is used in several senses in the New Testament, yet, if we examine the passages in which they occur, we shall find that there is a close connexion between them. The radical conception is that which is the most obvious, and is the first to be suggested by the English word—the conception of strength or efficacy, the virtue of a cause. It is unnecessary to cite specimens of the numerous and familiar passages in which we read of the power of God. Power is ascribed also to angels; and one chief particular in which they excel mankind is, that they have a larger domain of nature subject to their will. An angel could in one night destroy, by secret but irresistible agency, all the first-born of Mizraim; or all but annihilate the army of Sennacherib. An angel could with ease roll away the "very great" stone from the door of the sepulchre

of Jesus. The evident possession of superhuman power is to be regarded as one cause of the peculiar terror which the appearance of an angel inspires, and that not in weak woman only, but even in Roman soldiers. We read in Mark, that the women were "affrighted" when they saw the "young man" in the sepulchre; and in Matthew, that "for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." One of the orders of these superior beings seems to be so much distinguished by strength, that they take their name from it. So we read of "angels, principalities and powers." Rom. viii. 38. But in Ps. ciii. 20, it is regarded as an attribute common to them all:—"Bless the Lord, ye his angels, *that excel in strength*;" or, as it is literally, "*mighty ones of strength*." The extraordinary works which accompanied and furthered the founding of the Church, and even the order of persons in the Church who possessed the gift of working them, are familiarly named after the *power* which was thus manifested. "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? . . . and in thy name done many *powers*? (*δυνάμεις*)" Matt. vii. 22. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that *powers* (*δυνάμεις*). . . Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all *powers*? (*δυνάμεις*)" 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. The witness of the apostles to the Lord's resurrection was delivered "with great *power* (*δυνάμει*)," Acts iv. 33; and their mature converts were "strengthened with all strength (*ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει δυναμούμενοι*)." Col. i. 11.

The word *power* is sometimes used to indicate real, genuine, internal virtue or worth, as distinguished from mere outward show or pretence. Thus, in 1 Cor. iv. 19, 20, the Apostle says, "I will know not the *word τὸν λόγον* of them which are puffed up, but the *power τὴν δύναμιν*. For the kingdom of God is not in *word ἐν λόγῳ*, but in *power ἐν δυνάμει*." Also, in 2 Tim. iii. 5, he describes certain men as "having a *form μόρφωσιν* of godliness, but denying the *power τὴν δὲ δύναμιν* thereof." The *power* of a word is not the sound but the significance. Speaking of tongues, in 1 Cor. xiv. 11, he says,

"If I know not the *meaning τὴν δύναμιν* of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh a barbarian unto me."

Now, then, by considering these various, but connected senses of the word *power* in apostolic usage, we may be helped to the understanding of the remarkable expression of our text, where St. Paul tells us, that he has "suffered the loss of all things, and counts them but dung, that he may know the *power τὴν δύναμιν* of Christ's resurrection."

The power of Christ's resurrection includes—

#### I. THE POWER OF WHICH IT WAS THE EFFECT.

Nothing more affectingly displays power to the human mind than a resurrection from the dead. To turn water into wine, to increase bread, to heal the sick, are proofs of power over nature; but to bring life back when it has altogether gone, to recal a soul from the invisible world, is a more glorious manifestation of might, showing power which is absolute, universal and creative, which extends to the secret dwelling of departed men. The resurrections from the dead which were effected by the Lord Jesus during the course of His earthly ministry, must accordingly be regarded as taking the lead of all His mighty works. The daughter of Jairus was resuscitated just after she had expired; the widow's son, after a decease which had taken place at least some hours before; Lazarus of Bethany, who had been dead four days. Thus there was in these works a progressive manifestation of power.

But as these resurrections were the most illustrious of Christ's mighty works, so His own resurrection was more illustrious still than they. *It was a resurrection from a violent death.* He had been "crucified through weakness, and now He lived by the power of God." His enemies, on the alert, had taken every precaution to prevent His resurrection. "They made the sepulchre sure, sealing the very great stone, and setting a watch." Yet He rose in spite of all.

The power of Christ's resurrection appears more glorious



than that of the others, when we remember that *it was His own*. They were raised by Him, He raised Himself. For though His resurrection is often spoken of as effected by the power of His Father, yet passages are not wanting in which it is represented as His own doing. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John ii. 19). "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." (John x. 18). These various representations will present no difficulty if we remember the communion in power and will of the Son and the Father.

Again : Christ's resurrection contrasts advantageously with the others in regard to *ground or reason*. The damsel was raised in answer to her father's earnest entreaty. The widow's only son, because Jesus "had compassion" on the mother ; Lazarus, because he and his sisters were friends of Jesus. But *Christ was raised by virtue of His own holiness*. He was "God's Holy One, and could not see corruption." "It was not possible that he should be holden (κρατεῖσθαι) of death." (Acts ii. 24, 27.) The power which raised Him was His own holiness. Holiness and life are unalterably and indissolubly blent. The Holy One of God is mightier than death ; He is *the Resurrection and the Life*.

In conformity with these conceptions, St. Paul speaks to the Ephesians (i. 19, 20), of Christ's resurrection, as the grand typical instance of Divine power, *according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead*.

The power of Christ's resurrection includes—

## II. ITS WEIGHTY SIGNIFICANCE.

This significance is twofold, having an aspect—

First : *Towards Himself*. He had many times predicted, not His death only, but also His resurrection. This He had done to the Jews openly, and to the disciples privately. Sometimes He denoted the third day as the time when this resurrection should take place. These announcements were mysterious and wonderful to the disciples. In Mark ix. 10,

we read that they "questioned one with another, what the rising from the dead should mean." Moreover, those glorious, living words of farewell, which are reported by the disciple whom Jesus loved as spoken at the Supper, contain references, not only to His approaching death, but also to His subsequent resurrection. "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more ; but ye see me : *because I live, ye shall live also.* A little while, and ye shall not see me, *and again a little while, and ye shall see me,* because I go to the Father." These beautiful sayings were uttered just when the disciples most needed comfort. The thought that He was preparing them for His death, seems to have so dulled their ears, that He was but imperfectly understood, until, in answer to their questioning, He spake plainly, "And ye now therefore have sorrow ; but *I will see you again,* and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

The return of Jesus from the grave was, therefore, *needful to make good His own prediction.* The sequel must justify His words, or the disciples would have been thrown into most painful perplexity, between their conviction of the truth of His doctrine and the holiness of His character on the one hand, and suspicion of His credibility as a foreteller on the other. During the interval of sorrow, quiet consideration, and mutual impartation of sentiment which immediately followed the crucifixion, we cannot help imagining that predictions such as these must have been recalled. On the arrival of the critical morning, they were unprepared to believe at once the too joyful tidings of the women, who *remembered His words.* Yet in wonder, blent with imperfect and timid bodings of the truth, they hastened to the sepulchre. Convinced at last, they of necessity clung with double steadfastness to all that had been said by One who, in so eminent an instance, and in so grand and wonderful a manner, could make good His words.

Again : The resurrection of Jesus was *a convincing demonstration of His Messiahship.* The prophets had spoken on the one hand of humiliation, suffering, and death ; but on

the other, of triumph and length of days. (Ps. xvi. 10, 11 ; Isa. liii. 10—12.) These were the marks of the Messiah. The one had been inconclusive without the other ; but the force of both united was irresistible. This was the proof urged by the Apostle Peter on the Jews at Pentecost. He told them that the crucifixion was in accordance with the “determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,” and that the resurrection, of which he and the other apostles were appointed witnesses, and whose marvellously glorious effects were now apparent, was predicted by the prophet David. This argument brought about sharp and sudden conviction. St. Paul, also, in his Epistle to the Romans, (i. 4) speaks of Christ as “of the seed of David according to the flesh,” by which He was mortal ; but “determined as the Son of God *in power*, (*ἐν δυνάμει*) according to the Spirit of holiness, *by resurrection from the dead*.”

The significance of Christ's resurrection respects—

Secondly : *His believing followers*. Christ, as one with the race of mankind, suffered death, which was their sin working on His body. But His holiness, which is the life of the soul, raised His body from the grave. Now, from His union with the race, His spirit of holiness goes freely forth to sanctify mankind. As many as receive unresistingly the influence of that blest Spirit, repent, believe, are pardoned, and finally raised in likeness to Christ, by the same Spirit of holiness. Thus they receive entire redemption.

This explains—

(1) *The obligation to repentance as a consequence of Christ's resurrection*. Repentance is the first step towards holiness. It is, so to speak, a spontaneous revolution of the mind, a turning away from sin and a turning towards God. Christ Himself, in His charge to the apostles, shortly before His ascension, particularizes the preaching of repentance as a consequence of His resurrection (Luke xxiv. 47). “*That repentance and remission of sins, should be preached among all nations.*” So when the convinced Jews at Pentecost asked—*What shall we do ?* Peter answered, *Repent*. So

when he ascribes the healing of the lame beggar to the name of Jesus, the Risen Christ, he subjoins : *Repent ye, therefore, and be converted.* Acts iii. 19. And when the apostles were brought before the Sanhedrim, to answer for their preaching *all the words of this life*, Peter's vindication again runs thus : "*The God of our fathers raised up Jesus*"—that is, from the dead—"whom ye slew and hanged on a tree ; Him hath God exalted with His right hand"—a symbol of *power*—"to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

(2) The obligation to *confidence in Christ as the Saviour.* The resurrection is often represented as the basis of faith, since it undeniably demonstrates God's acceptance of Christ's voluntary death ; and that what the Serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness once effected for the bitten Israelites, God now accomplishes *in spirit and in truth* for all believing men.

(3) *The inspired hope of our own resurrection.* The resurrection of the body is only the outward climax of the work which begins in the sanctification of the soul. The two conceptions are continually blent in the mind and teaching of St. Paul. "If Christ be not raised, *ye are yet in your sins.* Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, *are perished.*" 1. Cor. xv. 18, 19. Again he says in Rom. viii. 10, 11. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but *the spirit is life* because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also *quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.*" St. Peter's words in his first epistle have the same mystic comprehensiveness. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a *living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

It is this *power* of Christ's resurrection, then, which St. Paul in our text so ardently desires to *know*, for which he declined

all other pursuits, regarding them as comparatively mean and contemptible. He desires *to know this power*. He desires *a thorough reception into his mind of the truth* that God's *power* had raised up Christ His Holy One. He desires *to understand* the weighty *significance* of Christ's resurrection as a confirmation of His doctrine, as a proof of His Divine Sonship. He desires *to know by experience* the same *power* working evermore in himself, removing him ever further from self and sin, bearing him ever nearer to Christ. He desires "by any means to attain unto *that resurrection* from the dead." \* Christ was his model ; and since Christ, as such, was perfected by resurrection, by the same, St. Paul regarded redemption consummated in His followers. All which he desired for himself in this world and in the future, and for which he strives to excite a like longing in the Philippians, he expresses in the one glorious and comprehensive word, *that resurrection from the dead*.

\* τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν.—Lachmann and Tischendorf.

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### THE WONDERFULNESS OF GOD'S COUNSEL.

"Wonderful in counsel."—  
Isaiah xxviii. 29.

THE context presents to us physical husbandry in two very different aspects. First : *As the effect of God's teaching*. And—Secondly : *As the emblem of God's teaching*. \* God's counsel is wonderful in all. His departments of action as

\* See Homilist, vol. III., p. 36.

a Creator, a Sovereign and a Redeemer. We shall confine our attention to the wonderfulness of His procedure as a Redeemer ; and our illustration shall be taken from the nature, the formation and the propagation of the redemptive system.

I. ITS NATURE IS WONDERFUL. What is it ? One word perhaps will best describe it : *Reconciliation*. It is called

the ministry of reconciliation. To see its wonderfulness, think of four things. First : That the reconciliation originates with the offended party. In human conduct it is the offender who is expected to seek for reconciliation. Were the offended to do it, human intercourse would become almost impossible. Self-respect in man prevents him from seeking this reconciliation with a man who has wickedly offended. But here is God the offended party, &c. Secondly : The offended party, who seeks the reconciliation, is *infinitely superior to the offender*. If, amongst our equals, we never think of seeking reconciliation with the men who have unjustly offended us, still more is it out of our thoughts if the offender is greatly our *inferior*. The idea of a lord seeking the friendship of a beggar who had insulted him, or a monarch the friendship of an obscure subject who had wickedly affronted him! Such attempts would be marvels in the human world. But here is the Infinite Sovereign of the Universe seeking reconciliation with the human world. Thirdly : The offended party, who is infinitely superior, offers reconciliation to the *lowest class of His foes*. There are two great classes of enemies to God—fallen angels

and fallen men ; men are the inferior. Yet He passed by the angels and took hold upon the seed of Abraham.\* Fourthly: The offended party, who is infinitely superior, offers reconciliation to the lowest class of His foes *at a most stupendous sacrifice*. If a man is not likely to seek the reconciliation of one who had offended him, and far more unlikely if he is greatly his inferior, still more unlikely is he to make any sacrifice in order to obtain it. But here is the Infinite One, whom we have offended, delivering up His only-begotten Son in order to win us back to friendship. Here is wonder, a shoreless abyss of wonders !

II. ITS FORMATION IS WONDERFUL. How is this system of reconciliation formed ? There are two things as to the mode which show the wonderfulness of the arrangement. First : *Its gradualness*. We, when we have a work to do, to which we attach importance, hurry at it, and are impatient for its accomplishment ; but God, to ripen this scheme, took four thousand long years. Secondly : *Its instruments*. Who are the agents employed in the working of it out ? When we have a work to do, we select the

\* See Homilist, vol. IV., p. 264.

best men we can get. God employed the agency of wicked men in the working out of His great reconciling plan. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," &c.

III. ITS PROPAGATION IS WONDERFUL. Three things show the wonderfulness of its propagation. First: *The character of the persons to whom its propagation was first entrusted.* To whom did He commit the ministry of this wonderful scheme? To the magnates, or the literati of His age? No, to a few poor fishermen. Secondly: *The class of persons to whom it was first offered.* Who were they? The greatest sinners on earth; the sinners at Jerusalem, who imbrued their hands in the blood of His only-begotten Son. Thirdly: *The pressing of it on the attention of those who frequently reject it.* If we were generous enough to offer reconciliation to an offender once, it is not likely we should continue to press it when he rejected it. But God continues to press the offer on sinners from age to age, and on the same man through the whole of a long life. Truly, He is wonderful in counsel. His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways.

#### FORM AND POWER.

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."—2 Tim. iii. 5.

THESE few words suggest certain consecutive thoughts of great practical moment.

I. THAT TRUE RELIGION IS GODLINESS. By godliness I mean *God-likeness*.\* There is a great deal of what is called religion that is anything but this. The religions of the world are more devil-like than God-like. True religion is *God-likeness*. What is meant by being like God? It does not mean—(1) Being like Him in a *natural* sense. He is Eternal, Omnipresent, Almighty. We can never be like Him in these respects. It does not mean—(2) Being like Him in an *intellectual* sense. His intellect understands all things accurately and thoroughly. He knows the origin, the essence, the relations, the uses, the bearings, and the ultimate issues of all things. "We are of yesterday and know nothing." But it means to be like Him *morally*. To be like a being morally, is to be swayed by the same governing disposition. Morally, I am like him who acts from the same master-impulse as

\* Although *εὐσέβεια* means *due reverence*, we take the *English* word in the sense above.

myself. Love is the imperial impulse in the Divine nature, and he who is ruled by love is like God. All can become like God in this respect. A child can love as well as a seraph, &c.

II. GODLINESS HAS ITS FORM. "A form of godliness." It has a way of expressing itself. First: *It has a form of expression towards God.* There is confession, prayer, praise, worship. Secondly: *It has a form of expression towards man:*—respect for the rights, compassion for the miseries and a loving desire for the happiness of all. Godliness must have its expressions both towards God and man, and those expressions have their forms.

III. THE FORMS OF GODLINESS SOMETIMES EXIST WITHOUT ITS POWER. First: *There is often a great deal of external worship where there is no godly devotion.* There are mere mechanical acts, empty words, spiritless strains. It was thus with the Jews of old: "they come unto thee and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but will not do them: and lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words but they

do them not." Secondly: *There is often a great deal of external philanthropy where there is no godly devotion.* There is much said, given, and done, for man in this age in the name of philanthropy, which is not prompted by nor inspired with godlike love.

IV. HAVING THE FORM WITHOUT THE POWER IS PRACTICAL INFIDELITY. To have nothing but the mere form is to deny the power. First: The mere form *misrepresents* the power. Mere form is a painted corpse, that misrepresents life. It is a galvanized body, its movements misrepresent the activities of life. Secondly: The mere form *counteracts* the power. It counteracts its influence upon ourselves. Attachment to forms crushes the spirit. "The letter killeth, &c." Counteracts its influence upon others. The hollow ritualism, and the stiff formality of professors, have ever counteracted the influence of spiritual religion. This is practical infidelity, and it is the worst kind of infidelity extant; it is an infidelity that repeats its religious creeds, says its prayers, sings its psalms, and performs with literal accuracy all its devotions, and therefore lies beyond the power of human logic. The infidelity of the Church, I



throw, is worse than the infidelity of the sceptic's press, club, or platform.

#### THE PREACHER.

"Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker." —Job xxxvi. 2, 3.

THESE are words which Elihu addresses to Job. The speaker is a young man of great genius and high culture. His thoughts are deep and devout, and his expressions clear and eloquent. The words may be used to represent some of the work of the true preacher.

I. THEY REPRESENT THE SIDE HE HAS TO TAKE. "I have yet to speak on God's behalf." Sin is a controversy with God. The millions of ungodly men are engaged in this controversy. The true preacher has to take the side of God in the discussion. First: *He has to defend the procedure of God.* He has to justify the ways of Heaven. Secondly: *He has to vindicate the character of God.* His character is the same—misrepresented, condemned. The true preacher has to clear his Maker of all ungodly accusations. Thirdly: *He has to*

*enforce the claims of God;* His claims to their supreme love and constant obedience. Fourthly: *He has to offer the redemption of God;* to show forth the wonderful mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

II. THEY REPRESENT THE KNOWLEDGE HE HAS TO COMMUNICATE. "I will fetch my knowledge from afar." All, perhaps, that Elihu meant by this expression, was that he did not intend dealing in common-places, to go over the same ground which others had trodden, but to go into fresh regions for his thoughts. Literally the true preacher has to fetch his knowledge from afar. First: *From afar in relation to the intuitions of men.* The doctrines of the Gospel lie far away from the inbred sentiments of the human soul. Secondly: *From afar in relation to the philosophical deductions of men.* Human reason could never discover the essential truths of the Gospel. "Eye hath not seen." &c. Thirdly: *From afar in relation to the natural spirit of men.* The spirit of the Gospel is 'foreign to the disposition of the ungodly world. We have to fetch our knowledge "from afar." We have to go back over the centuries, back to Christ and His apostles, &c.

### III. THEY REPRESENT THE PURPOSE HE HAS TO MAINTAIN.

"I will ascribe righteousness unto my Maker." Elihu's purpose seemed to be, in all that he intended saying, to demonstrate to Job that God was righteous in all His ways, and worthy of his confidence.

The conviction of God's righteousness must be amongst the deepest and most invincible forces in the soul of the true preacher. A sceptical philosophy, in criticizing the Divine procedure,

may sometimes throw such a thick mist over the righteousness of God, as to hide it for a time from his reason, but his heart must hold on to it with tenacity. God's ways are equal. This must be his watchword, his landmark in his mental explorations, his pole star in his excursions. With this conviction he will show, First: *That no suffering falls on any creature more than he deserves.* Secondly: *That no work is demanded of any creature more than he can render.*

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## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

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### DEATH OF SOCRATES.

When he had thus spoken, "Be it so, Socrates," said Criton; "but what orders do you leave to those who are present, or to myself, either respecting your children, or anything else, in the execution of which we should most gratify you?" "What I always do say, Criton," he replied, "nothing new: that if you pay due attention to yourselves, do what you will, you will always do what is acceptable to myself, to my family, and to your own selves, though you should not now promise me anything. But if you neglect yourselves, and are unwilling to live, following the track, as it were, of what I have said both now and heretofore, you will do nothing the more, though you should now promise many things, and that with earnestness." "We shall take care, therefore,"

said Criton, "so to act. But how would you be buried?" "Just as you please," said he, "if you can but catch me, and I do not elude your pursuit;" and, at the same time, gently laughing, and addressing himself to us, "I cannot persuade Criton," he said, "my friends, that I am that Socrates who now disputes with you, and methodizes every part of the discourse: but he thinks that I am he whom he will shortly behold dead, and asks how I ought to be buried. But all that long discourse which some time since I addressed to you, in which I asserted that after I had drunk the poison I should no longer remain with you, but should depart to certain felicities of the blessed, this I seem to have declared to him in vain, though it was undertaken to console both you and myself. Be

surety, therefore, for me to Criton, to the reverse of that, for which he became surety to the judges: for he was my bail that I remain, but be you my bail that I shall not remain when I die, but shall depart hence, that Criton may bear it the more easily, and may not be affected when he sees my body burnt or buried, as if I were suffering some dreadful misfortune; and that he may not say at my interment, that Socrates is laid out, or is carried out, or is buried. For be well assured of this, my friend Criton, that when we speak amiss we are not only blameable as to our expressions, but likewise do some evil to our souls. But it is fit to be of good heart, and to say that my body will be buried, and to bury it in such manner as may be most pleasing to yourselves, and as you may esteem it most agreeable to our laws."

When he had thus spoken, he arose, and went into another room, that he might wash himself, and Criton followed him, but he ordered us to wait for him. We waited, therefore, accordingly, discoursing over, and reviewing among ourselves what had been said; and sometimes speaking about his death, how great a calamity it would be to us; and sincerely lamenting that we, like those who are deprived of their fathers, should pass the rest of our life in the condition of orphans. But when he had washed himself, his sons were brought to him (for he had two little ones, and one older), and the woman belonging to his family likewise came into him: but when he had spoken to them before Criton, and had left them such injunctions as he thought proper, he ordered the boys and women to depart, and he himself returned to us. And it was now near the setting of the sun: for he had been away in the inner room for a long time. But when he

came in from bathing he sat down and did not speak much afterwards: for then the servant of the Eleven came in, and standing near him, "I do not perceive that in you, Socrates," said he, "which I have taken notice of in others; I mean that they are angry with me, and curse me, when being compelled by the magistrates, I announce to them that they must drink the poison. But, on the contrary, I have found you up to the present time to be the most generous, mild, and best of all the men that ever came into this place; and therefore I am well convinced that you are not angry with me, but with the authors of your present condition, for you know who they are. Now, therefore, (for you know what I came to tell you) farewell; and endeavor to bear this necessity as easily as possible." And at the same time, bursting into tears, and turning himself away, he departed. But Socrates, looking after him, said, "And thou, too, farewell; and we shall take care to act as you advise." And at the same time, turning to us, "How courteous," he said, "is the behaviour of that man! During the whole time of my abode here, he has visited me, and often conversed with me, and proved himself to be the best of men. And now how generously he weeps on my account! But let us obey him, Criton, and let some one bring the poison, if it is bruised, and if not, let the man whose business it is, bruise it." "But, Socrates," said Criton, "I think that the sun still hangs over the mountains, and is not set yet. And at the same time, I have known others, who have drunk the poison very late, after it was announced to them, who have supped and drunk abundantly. Therefore do not be in such haste, for there is yet time enough." Socrates replied, "Such

men, Criton, act fitly in the manner in which you have described, for they think to derive some advantage from so doing; and I also with propriety shall not act in this manner. For I do not think I shall gain anything by drinking it later, except becoming ridiculous to myself through desiring to live, and being sparing of life, when nothing of it any longer remains. Go, therefore," said he, "be persuaded, and comply with my request." Then Criton, hearing this, gave a sign to the boy who stood near him; and the boy departing, and having stayed for some time, came back with the person that was to administer the poison, who brought it pounded in a cup. And Socrates, looking at the man, said, "Well, my friend (for you are knowing in these matters) what is to be done?" "Nothing," he said, "but after you have drunk it to walk about until a heaviness takes place in your legs, and then to lie down. This is the manner in which you have to act." And at the same time he extended the cup to Socrates. And Socrates taking it,—and, indeed, Echecrates—with great cheerfulness, neither trembling nor suffering any change for the worse in color or countenance, but, as he was used to do, looking up sternly at the man, "What say you," he said, "as to making a libation from this potion? May I do it or not?" "We can only bruise as much, Socrates," he said, "as we think sufficient for the purpose." I understand you," he said; "but it is both lawful and proper to pray to the gods that my departure from hence thither may be prosperous, which I entreat them to grant may be the case." And, so saying, he stopped, and drank the poison very readily and pleasantly. And thus far, indeed, the greater part of us were tolerably well able to refrain from

weeping; but when we saw him drinking, and that he had drunk it, we could no longer restrain our tears. And from me, indeed, in spite of my efforts, they flowed, and not drop by drop; so that, wrapping myself in my mantle, I bewailed myself, not, indeed, for his misfortune, but for my own, considering what a companion I should be deprived of. But Criton, who was not able to restrain his tears, was compelled to rise before me. And Apollodorus, who, during the whole time prior to this, had not ceased from weeping, then wept aloud with great bitterness, so that he infected all who were present except Socrates. But Socrates upon seeing this, exclaimed, "What are you doing, you strange men? In truth, I principally sent away the women lest they should produce a disturbance of this kind; for I have heard that it is proper to die among well-omened sound. Be quiet, therefore, and maintain your fortitude." And, when we heard this, we were ashamed, and restrained our tears.

But he, when he found during his walking about, that his legs became heavy, and had told us so, laid himself down on his back. For the man had told him, to do so. And at the same time, he who gave him the poison, touching him at intervals, examined his feet and legs. And then, pressing very hard on his foot, he asked him if he felt it. But Socrates answered that he did not. And after this he pressed his thighs, and thus, going upwards, he showed us that he was cold and stiff.

And Socrates also touched himself, and said that when the poison touched his heart he should then depart. But now the lower part of his body was almost cold; when uncovering himself (for he was covered) he said (and these were his last words) "Criton, we owe a

cock to Æsculapius. Discharge this debt, therefore, for me, and do not neglect it." "It shall be done, said Criton," "but consider whether you have any other commands." To this inquiry of Criton he made no reply; but shortly after he moved himself, and the man uncovered him. And Socrates fixed his eyes; which, when Criton

perceived, he closed his mouth and eyes. This, Echecrates, was the end of our comrade; a man, as it appears to me, the best of those whom we were acquainted with at that time, and, besides this, the most prudent and just.—*From Taylor's Translation of the "Phædon."*

## Theological Notes and Queries.

### OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

**REPLICANT.** In answer to **QUERIST** Nos. 4—9, p. 116. We profess ourselves incompetent to decide on this class of questions which have been sent by C. M. If he will favor us with inquiries the answers to which would tend to elucidate any portion of *revealed* truth, we will do our best to give him satisfaction.

#### THE PROMISES TO ISRAEL.

**REPLICANT.** In answer to **QUERIST** No. 10, p. 116. The promise of the Messiah is an exception indeed; since it includes all other real blessings, even eternal life itself.

#### ADOPTION.

**REPLICANT.** In answer to **QUERIST** No. 11, p. 116. The word *υιοθεσια*, which is used in Rom. viii. 15, 23, ix. 4, Gal. iv. 5, Ephes. i. 5, and is in all those places rendered by *adoption*, properly means *the placing as a son*. To adopt is to make one a son otherwise than by birth. In a peculiar sense the Israelites were chosen of old to this blessing. "To

them belonged the adoption."—Rom. ix. 4. Under the present economy it belongs to the Christian Church. Gal. iv. 5, Ephes. It is not inconsistent with the Fatherhood of God, because it confers on us a higher worship than we had by natural birth. Bengel says, "The dignity of sons which is possessed by seniors, with use of the patrimony." By adoption God confers a further privilege on His sons. If we conceive of the new state as entered by regeneration, we can hardly talk of adoption. The terms, both correct and Scriptural, must be used separately, to prevent confusion of idea. It is worthy of remark, that the old Greek ecclesiastical writers sometimes use the word *υιοθεσια* when they mean baptism.

#### THE PAWNBROKER.

**REPLICANT.** In answer to **QUERIST** No. 12, p. 116. There does not appear to be anything in the occupation of a pawnbroker which has the essence of sin. If there were,

then it would be contrary to the Christian law to lend money on mortgage, which is the same in principle. At the same time, it is obvious both that the occupation exposes one engaged in it to peculiar temptations, against which it behoves him to be especially on his guard; and, also, that it must often subject him to the appearance of being hard and unfeeling. We do not think that the letter of the law of Moses binds us in this respect.

#### CHRIST AND MARY MAGDALENE.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 13, p. 116. We do not agree with you in setting aside St. Mark's clear assertion that "he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." There is no proof of any ascension before

that which took place at the end of the forty days, and speculation is useless. We have never met with any explanation of the words of Christ which has fully satisfied us. They have ever presented a difficulty to exegetes, and have occasioned a great variety of interpretations. Dean Alford, who nearly agrees with Grotius, paraphrases thus:—"Do not thus—for I am not yet restored finally to you in the body—I have yet to ascend to the Father." He then remarks:—"This implies in the background *another and truer touching*, when he should have ascended to the Father. . . .

The two renderings of *ἀπρου* to be guarded against, are—(1) A laying hold of, to retain. . . . (2) A laying hold of, to worship," as in Matt. xxviii. 9.

## Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

#### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

**A HISTORY OF ENGLAND FOR THE PEOPLE. FROM THE EARLIEST RECORDS.** Re-Edited and continued to the death of the PRINCE ALBERT. By a Member of the University of London. Fourth Edition. London: William Tegg.

THE History of England is the history of England's past life, and though geographically small, has been the scene on which that life has to operate; it has played out a drama whose acts are thrilling, and whose moral is worthy the study of ages. England's story has been often written, but not always with literary skill, seldom with philosophic analysis, and more seldom still with righteous impartiality. Many of the works are so voluminous, that in this age of intense activity few can command the time for their perusal; others are so intolerably dull, that every page diffuses a drowsiness through the system, and others are so

one-sided in their treatment of facts and character, that the sooner they are burnt the better. All preceding histories have left ample room for the one before us. It brings within the compass of eight hundred pages the leading events, and the prominent characters of our past times. There are no waste words, no pedantic disquisition, no stiff stateliness of style, no attempt at being grand, here. Considering the fulness of information, the clearness of statement, the vividness of style—the condensation is remarkable. It is just the history for the people, and the people should possess it; it comes within their means.

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THE COLLECTED WRITINGS OF EDWARD IRVING. (In Five Volumes.)  
 Edited by his Nephew, REV. G. CARLYLE, M.A. Vol. I. London:  
 Alexander Strahan & Co.

MRS. OLIPHANT, in her interesting biography, has revived the memory of Edward Irving—a name which, thirty years ago, fell from a thousand lips every day, but which was fast sinking into oblivion until her pen brought his grand figure once more on the stage. Taken for all in all, Edward Irving was a type of men who appear in very distant intervals in the world's history. Heaven is not lavish in its gifts of extraordinary men. Once in a century, perhaps, they come. For this reason they arrest attention and demand study. Mr. Carlyle, his loyal and talented nephew, in the voluminous work of which this is the first volume, is engaged in reproducing the utterances of this marvellous man; and such utterances are seldom heard in these days—stately in their sentences, Miltonic in their ring, prophet-like in spirit. The following extract may be given as a specimen of the great man's spirit and style. It is on the world's neglect of the Bible:—"Oh! if books had but tongues to speak their wrong, then might this book well exclaim, Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! I came from the love and embrace of God; and mute nature, to whom I brought no boon, did me rightful homage. To man I came, and my words were to the children of men. I disclosed to you the mysteries of hereafter, and the secrets of the throne of God. I set open to you the gates of salvation, and the way of eternal life, heretofore unknown. Nothing whatever did I withhold from your hope and ambition; and upon your earthly lot I poured the full horn of Divine providence and consolation. But ye requited me with no welcome, ye held no festivity on my arrival, ye sequester me from happiness and heroism, closeting me with sickness and infirmity; ye make not of me, nor use me for your guide to wisdom and prudence; but press me into your list of duties, and withdraw me to a mere corner of your time; and most of ye set at nought, and utterly disregard me. I came, the fulness of the knowledge of God. Angels delighted in my company, and desired to dive into my secrets; but ye, mortals, place masters over me, subjecting me to the discipline and dogmatism of men,

and tutoring me in your schools of learning. I came not to be silent in your dwellings, but to speak welfare to you and to your children. I came to rule, and my throne is set up in the hearts of men. Mine ancient residence was in the bosom of God; no residence will I have but the soul of an immortal; and if you had entertained me, I should have possessed you of the peace which I had with God, 'when I was with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.' "

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, CORRESPONDENCE, &c., OF LYMAN BEECHER, D.D.  
 Edited by his Son, CHARLES BEECHER. In Two Volumes, Vol. I.  
 London: Sampson Low, Son, & Gurton.

SOME persons denounce Autobiographies. They regard the principle of a man writing the memoir of himself as vicious. This is nonsense. If a man's life is valuable, it is worth writing; and if it is to be written, no man can do it so well as the man himself. No one so well understands the subject, and no one has so strong motives to be faithful to it, and no one has such power to invest it with charm of reality. Biographers generally, either from the spirit of adulation on the one hand, or detraction on the other, make their heroes either far nobler or baser than they really were. The man who writes his own life will find modesty on the one side restraining him from yielding to any temptation to exaggerate his own merits; and self-respect on the other, from any tendency to depreciate his own worth. The name of Beecher is now—through the writings of Mrs. Stowe, the daughter of the subject of this work, and the somewhat sanguinary speeches, lately delivered amongst us, of her brother, Mr. Henry Ward Beecher—pretty well-known in England. Many, therefore, we doubt not, will give a hearty welcome to this Autobiography. There is a great variety in it. Domestic incidents, religious revivals, theological speculations, and ecclesiastical movements, all centering on the godly life of a thoughtful and active man, give the work a peculiar charm for all classes.

THE CHRIST OF THE GOSPELS, AND THE ROMANCE OF M. RENAN. (Three Essays.) By the REV. DR. SCHAFF, and M. NAPOLEON ROUSSEL.  
 London: Religious Tract Society.

THIS volume contains a treatise by Dr. Schaff on the "Christ of the Gospels," in which the perfection of our Lord's character, as portrayed in the evangelists, is set forth as an argument for the Divinity of His purpose and mission. If the spotless purity of Christ's character can be demonstrated, His superhuman origin and nature must inevitably follow. The essay is an admirable delineation of the excellence of Christ, and as an argument against Renan and his school, is conclusive. This little book also contains two essays by Napoleon Roussel, one of the ablest of the French Protestant pastors, "in which the insidious and latent principles of the Vie de Jésus are stripped of their disguise,



and laid bare in their naked deformity. Many who might be deluded and seduced by the rhetorical romance of M. Renan, would start back with horror from an unveiled statement of his teachings." We commend this volume as an admirable antidote to the evil it is intended to remove.

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**THE FAMILY CIRCLE.** By REV. ANDREW MORTON. (Third thousand.)  
Edinburgh: W. Oliphant & Co. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

THIS little book, the author informs us, is designed for the fireside of the common people. It is composed of discourses which the author delivered in the regular course of his ministry. Its object is to show how the humblest home may be made happy. The subject is—Home, with all its Domestic Relations, and in connexion with its changes here and destiny in Eternity. The idea and execution of this work are alike admirable. We do not wonder that such a book has already passed through two editions. Its editions should be numbered by hundreds.

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**THE PHILOSOPHY OF EVANGELICISM; EVOLVED FROM THE RELATIONS BETWEEN CONSCIENCE AND THE ATONEMENT.** London: Bell & Daldy.

THIS is a book small in compass but big in meaning. Every page is filled with the profoundest thinking on the most vital parts of our faith. To do justice to the author's argument, and to point out where we agree, and wherein we differ, we should require several sheets in a "Quarterly." Suffice it to say, that every theological dogmatist and Evangelical preacher should read and ponder every part of it.

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**THE WORKS OF THOMAS GOODWIN, D.D.** With General Preface. By JOHN C. MILLER, D.D. And Memoir, by R. HALLEY. Vol. VIII.  
London: James Nisbet & Co.

THIS is another elegant volume, making the eighth of Dr. Goodwin's works. This contains discourses on the subject of Faith, the Acts of Faith, and the Properties of Faith. These discourses are equal to any of author's best productions. His points of thought are always numerous, and always richly illustrated by Scripture quotations. His illustrations are not always apt or decent, as for example:—"When a marriage is proposed unto a woman, that which may move her at first to listen to it, may be the hearsay of an estate, and paying her debts with which she is encumbered; these may persuade her to view and see the person, and to entertain a visit from him, and to acquaint herself with him; but after some long converse, her heart is so taken with his person, that if he had nothing, she would beg with him the world over, for she is satisfied with his person alone. And thus it is between our souls and Christ; we come to Christ at first as the Lamb of God that takes away our sins, that will save us from wrath and pay our debts (and the truth is we must always come so to Him to cleanse us from sin every day)." The enterprising publisher has so done his part as to leave nothing to be desired.

**A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO ROBERT J. WALKER.** From an Old Acquaintance. London: Saunders, Otley, & Co. Also:—**THE NEGRO'S PLACE IN NATURE.** By JAMES HUNT, Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.S.L., F.A.S.L. London: Trübner & Co.

Such works as the above do not properly fall within our province to notice; yet, as the publishers have sent them to us, and they are on our table, a word calling attention to them may keep the conscience of the critic clear. The former refers to the American War. At the outset, we, in these pages, pronounced our judgment upon this terrible catastrophe, and advocated separation. We profess sympathy with neither of the combatants; but, on the ground of humanity and the religion of Christ, we deprecate the unprecedented outrages which are involved in every hour's continuation of this inhuman struggle. How ministers of the Gospel, can like Ward Beecher, on any ground, sanction its continuation, is to us an astounding marvel. But that gentleman who has recently, unsuccessfully, according to his own confession, endeavored to wake up sympathy in this country for his party, is, in the former publication reported to have said, that "when the war is over, *the best blood of England must flow for the outrage England has perpetrated upon America.*" The blood, therefore, now deluging his own country, will not satiate him. The second publication is a learned disquisition, the purpose of which is to prove the negro's unfitness for civilization. As we understand it, we are not at present prepared to accept such a conclusion.

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**EXPOSITIONS OF GREAT PICTURES.** By RICHARD HENRY SMITH, JUN. Illustrated by photographs. London: James Nisbet & Co.

THOSE who procured the author's "Exposition of the Cartoons of Raphael," will be glad to possess themselves of this work which is intended to be its companion. The great pictures here photographed are:—*La Madonna Della Seggiola*—*The Transfiguration*, by Raphael—*The Resurrection of Lazarus*, by Michael Angelo and Sebastian del Piombo—*The Last Supper*, by Leonardo de Vinci—*Christ presented to Pilate*, by Correggio—*The Descent from the Cross*, by Rubens—and, *The Burial of our Lord*, by Raphael. Mr. Smith's artistic criticisms are for the most part intelligent and honest, and his spirits in reverent sympathy with the great subjects of the paintings.

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**THE LAST SUPPER.** Painted by LEONARDO DE VINCI, for the Dominican Convent of Santa Madonna della Grazia, at Milan. Engraved on Steel "in pure line." G. F. BACON. London: William Tegg.

RUBENS has left on record his opinion of this *chef d'œuvre* of the most profound and versatile genius the world has ever seen, in these words:—

"The best of the examples that Leonardo has left us is *The Last Supper*, in which he has represented the Apostles in places suited to them ; but our Saviour is in the midst, being most honorable, having no figure near enough to press on or incommode him. His attitude is grave, his arms are in a loose, free posture, to show the greater grandeur, while the Apostles appear in agitation by their vehement desire to know which of them shall betray him." We deem it right to state that the framing size of this engraving is 24 inches by 17 inches, and the price of prints 6s. on Indian paper 12s.

This sublime subject is the noblest that could occupy the profoundly speculative intellect and commanding genius of the painter ; the picture is said to have occupied Leonardo three years, and to have been completed in 1492. Our readers who are lovers of sacred art of the highest class will do well to procure this beautiful engraving.

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THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD. By REV. ASHTON OXENDEN. London : William Macintosh.

THIS is a very sensible, well-written, and thoroughly practical exposition of the Parables of our Lord. It is just the book for Sunday School Teachers and Sunday School Libraries. The most illiterate may understand the author's meaning, and the most learned may be instructed by his teaching.

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ENGLISH SACRED POETRY OF THE OLDEN TIME. Collected and arranged by REV. L. B. WHITE, M.A. London : Religious Tract Society.

THIS is, in every sense, an exquisite production. The poetry is radiant with consecrated genius, the illustrations are *chefs d'œuvre* of art, the typography, the paper, and the binding scarcely admit of improvement. The editor has done his work with great judgment and taste, and the book as a whole is a fit companion for the best that now adorn the tables of our English drawing-rooms.

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THE FUTURE OF THE HUMAN RACE. By ALFRED BOWEN EVANS, D.D. London : William Sheffington. THIS work contains four discourses, the subjects of which are :—The Orders of the Saved—The Saved Nations—The Binding of Satan—and, The Judgment Books—all of which are founded on passages selected from the 20th and 21st chapters of Revelation. There are many golden thoughts strikingly expressed in these lectures. PARADISE, OR THE PRESENT HOME OF THE HOLY DEAD. A Discourse delivered on the occasion of the Death of the Most Rev. Richard Whately, D.D. By Rev. WILLIAM CROOK. London : Hamilton, Adams, and Co. THIS is a very able discourse on an all-important subject delivered on a most interesting occasion. THE LOST MINISTRY. By Rev. W. H. WYLIE. London : Elliot Stock & Co. THIS also is an able sermon on a subject much neglected, but which demands earnest attention.



# A HOMILY

ON

## The Unjust Steward.

“And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”—Luke xvi. 1—13.



WE have here a parable concluded by a clear and weighty moral, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” But although the moral is clearly expressed, and its truth abundantly evident, there has been no little difficulty experienced by commentators in tracing the connexion of the parable with

the moral, and seeing how it is enforced by it. This is the more remarkable, when we reflect that the parable must have been given to elucidate and enforce the moral, and not to obscure it ; and, further, that so far as the context shows, those who heard it delivered seem to have experienced no such difficulty in appreciating its scope and power. And yet it is just possible that this may be one of the instances in which we, who have before us only the written record whereby to form our judgment on the meaning of our Lord's sayings, must miss the expressiveness of tone and manner in the living speaker to aid our apprehension of His meaning.

The interpretations that have been offered of this parable are almost as numerous as the interpreters, everyone having a variation of his own on some point or other. In their main features, however, they might be reduced to two or three primary views ; and, indeed, nearly all proceed upon the same fundamental idea regarding the lesson of the parable. This basis we conceive to be the source of all the variations, and the cause of all the difficulty ; and we would endeavor in the first place to examine this basis, and show its error—not entering into all the details—but only so far considering it as may be sufficient to establish a true basis of interpretation.

That common basis to which we refer is—That the parable is intended to give a lesson on Christian prudence,—that because the steward showed a wisdom in earthly matters, which was commended, so should Christians exercise commendable wisdom in heavenly matters. The objections we would urge against this view are—

First : The Divine Teacher, in carrying out and impressing the lesson of the parable, speaks not of *prudence*, but of *faithfulness* and *justice*. “Faithful in the least, faithful in much ;” “Unjust in the least, unjust in much ;” are the Saviour’s observations in applying it. And although it has been stated in support of this view that these observations are to remind us that Christian prudence is faithfulness to God—and although such is in a sense true—and it is undeniable that the most clear-sighted prudence and the most

conscientious faithfulness perfectly harmonize, so that faithfulness is true prudence; yet these two virtues are so different in their character—the cautious prudence that looks to one's own interest, and the conscientious faithfulness that respects the rights of others—are so different, that nothing but confusion can arise by giving an example of the one as an illustration of the other. That the parable may show that unfaithfulness is imprudent, and was intended to show that, we believe, but not by *confounding* prudence and faithfulness.

Secondly : On the supposition that prudence is the lesson of the parable, there is not merely a purposelessness, but a positive unfitness, in the choice of the characters to illustrate the lesson. In all the other parables of our Lord, we find a peculiar fitness in the choice of characters to illustrate their lesson. A shepherd illustrates watchful care; a father, tender love and forgiveness; a king, authority; and so on. But there seems no such fitness in making a steward an example of prudence. "Of a steward it is required that a man be found faithful," says the apostle, speaking the common-sense of mankind; and therefore his relation to his master is well fitted to illustrate faithfulness, but very badly fitted to illustrate prudence. And this difficulty those who support such a view feel strongly; for in order to give an appearance of consistency to their view, they must represent the rich man, not as a master confiding in a servant, but as a mere sharper playing a game of knavery with his steward, and commending his superior cleverness. And they find it necessary to give a caution against the supposition that the unfaithfulness of the steward is commended, evidently feeling that there is an incongruous element introduced into the parable by the relation of master and steward.

Thirdly : That there is any circumstance recorded in the parable that may furnish an example of prudence is more than questionable—for what is the test of prudence? Not mere show of cleverness, but success (Matt. vii. 24—27; house on sand, house on rock)—and there is no such success mentioned. The steward calculated that by getting others to

join with him in cheating his master to their advantage, that they would faithfully return the advantage to him. But unless we had positive knowledge of the fact having occurred, we think such an issue very doubtful, to say the least. It is not an unfailing rule, that those who join in cheating others are always faithful to each other, especially to one in difficulty, who can do them no more good or ill ; and unless such success had been proved, the example, as one of prudence, fails. It is true that it is said the lord commended the unjust steward, and so he may be said to have had success in that way ; but if so unlikely and unnatural a thing is to be taken as literally true, it was a success which the steward did not reckon on, and which no prudent man would be wise in reckoning on again ; and in so far as it was not, and could not be anticipated, however *favorable* to him it might be, it was no real commendation of his *prudence* and foresight.

We consider, however, that the sentence, "The lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely," was spoken ironically, and is to be understood in the reverse of its direct meaning ; for such an unlikely and unnatural thing, even allowing that it might in a particular case occur, would be unsuited for the purpose of a parable, the whole force of which depends upon every character acting in a natural and usual, or, at least, likely way ; and the statement that the lord commended the steward—who cheated him—for his cleverness in so doing, is so unusual and unnatural as to suggest the opposite. In calling it unusual and unnatural, we do not mean to say that what the poet says about

"The stern joy which warriors feel  
In foemen worthy of their steel,"

is mere fancy ; or, that two rogues contending in a game of knavery may not commend each other's superior adroitness even when losing by it. But none of these at all meets the case in hand ; for where the warrior commends his foeman's valor, and the knave his opponent's adroitness, it is the case of rivals in the same kind of excellence, commending superiority in that after which they are striving. Here the

case is widely different. He who is said to commend sharpness, is not a rival in that line, nor a mere indifferent spectator; but he is a master who suffers injury from a servant of whom he expected faithfulness. And we venture to affirm that it is contrary both to the commonest and to the deepest knowledge of human nature, that admiration and praise of the villain's sharpness should be the readiest and most noticeable result of injured outraged confidence. We should expect wrath and vengeance rather than commendation; and when we reflect on the power which a master had in Judæa to imprison and torment, and even sell, his fraudulent debtors, the steward's wise scheme must appear as anything but an example of prudence.

We apprehend that the true key to the parable is the understanding of this statement, and on till the end of the ninth verse, in the reverse of its direct signification. And there are many other considerations, in addition to those already stated, which favor this view.

First: Such an ironical use of language is both natural and common, and to be met with in all literature, sacred and profane. Not to mention Elijah's mocking the prophets of Baal, and some passages in Paul's epistles, we merely refer to what our Lord says of John the Baptist:—"What went ye out to see?" he asks, "a reed shaken with the wind?" In what more forcible way could He have called attention to John's unshaken, unflinching constancy? And so, again, his indifference to, his contempt of, earthly comforts in the fulfilment of his important mission, is set forth:—"What went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment?"

In these instances, there is a peculiar appropriateness in this ironical use of language; and there seems equal appropriateness in the use of it in this parable. It gives a more striking view of the folly of unfaithfulness—this sudden confronting of the steward, in the midst of his villainy, with his offended master, breaking in upon our almost unconscious admiration of the steward's cleverness by the suggestion, "and the lord commended the unjust steward."



It is as if the Great Teacher, to show us the folly and danger of a way we thought safe and pleasant to walk in, should take us along what we regarded as its safe and even path, and as we looked with pleasure on its flowery borders, in an instant should point us to a chasm yawning before us, deep and wide, on the edge of which our feet were slipping, and call to us, "that is your safe and pleasant way—go forward," so forcibly does the thought of the offended master's knowledge of his villainy turn all his seeming wisdom to folly. And the proverbial maxim which follows, seems to be a retrospect of the steward's folly in the same ironical manner. "The children of this world are wiser *towards* their generation than the children of light" (the correct translation), reads like, "knaves know best to deal with their fellows for their own lasting advantage," a maxim in its direct meaning so contrary to experience, and to the Jewish ideas under the theocracy, and to the innumerable adages scattered through the Proverbs of Solomon, and the Psalms, and the prophets, to this purpose. "Trust in the Lord, and do good, and so shalt thou possess the land." "The crafty are taken in their own net." And so especially contrary is it to every sentence of the 37th Psalm, that it seems the reverse rendering of a Jewish proverb, as if we should say, "Knavery is the best policy."

The direction, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," follows aptly in its forcible irony, as the application of the parable to Christian conduct. Its plain direction to make friends of wealth unjustly gotten, who will take us into their everlasting dwellings when we die, or it fails, is so contrary to all religious truth, that every interpreter agrees that the Saviour cannot intend in reality to give us such an advice, and seeks by some peculiar rendering of the words to avert such a conclusion. But not to mention the unsatisfactoriness of such a twisting of words, it seems to us to be more truthful, and to evince a truer reverence for the Saviour's words of wisdom, to conclude that He used these expressions in a forcible irony, intended by Himself, and

understood by His hearers—tone and manner expressing it—than to suppose such tampering with plain words, as seems to imply some ignorance or negligence on the part of Him who uttered them.

Such a view of these verses renders the whole parable, we conceive, plain and intelligible. We regard the steward as an example of the folly of unfaithfulness; that is the natural lesson we should expect from the story of a master and his steward, and it gives a unity and consistency to the whole lesson; adds force to the remark, “faithful in least, faithful in much,” and wings the arrow of the moral to its mark, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

Faithfulness, then, we conceive to be the duty inculcated in this parable; faithfulness in regard to the wealth and possessions of earth, faithfulness in money matters, not merely as justice to man, but as a duty to God. This duty is enforced by exposing the folly of unfaithfulness, the madness of trying to unite the service of God and mammon.

What the peculiar manifestation of the error exposed and rebuked by this parable, was, is not expressly stated in the context. It was addressed by the Saviour to His disciples and the general body of His followers, who no doubt needed the lesson, but the Pharisees seem to have felt the especial weight of its rebuke, for we are told that the Pharisees who were covetous heard all these things, and they derided Him. Hence we may conclude that it was an error emanating from them, and in which they were especially guilty. From the form of the parable we might almost be tempted to suppose, that the Pharisees had propagated a doctrine similar to that blasphemous proclamation of the Romish Church, which roused the slumbering spirit of Christianity to its rebuke in the past ages, and gave occasion to the reformers to throw aside the trammels of Romish superstition, and light the torch of the Reformation—the doctrine that men, by giving money and giving largely to pious and charitable purposes, might, through the merits of saints, and the prayers of priests and the blessings of the poor, be admitted into heaven, however

great their sins, or aggravated their transgressions. And there are some things recorded of the Pharisees that give some color to such a supposition. They are often rebuked for their hypocrisy and covetousness. Ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, but inwardly ye are full of extortion and excess, is the accusation against them ; and again : "They devour widows' houses and for a shew make long prayers." They even turned God's house into a den of thieves. But although their practices seemed to favor such a view of uniting the service of God and mammon, and it is hardly possible but such practices must have in a great measure influenced their religious teachings, yet inasmuch as we have no direct evidence that they proceeded to such a height of blasphemy as openly to proclaim, that to give money to saints, to build the tombs of prophets and give abundant alms to the poor, would gain such favor with these, that they would receive them to their heavenly habitations, we think that they had not preached such a blasphemy openly and undisguisedly.

It would rather seem that the full development of this shameless lie was reserved for Christian times, when the mystery of iniquity exhibited its most appalling power of wickedness. It would rather seem that the stern rigidity of the Mosaic economy, while it failed to develop fully the religious thought of man, and in some measure acted as a restraint on free thought, also restrained much of the excesses and corruptions of the evil heart of man, and prevented the full play of the Mystery of Iniquity.

But although that error was not displayed in its full magnitude of iniquity in Judea, yet the elements of that error were there, perverting and destroying, and it is against the elements of error that this parable is directed. It exposes the folly of that hypocrisy which looks to men for commendation, and the madness of that blinding mammon-worship which makes men believe that all blessings in earth and heaven may be procured with money.

This is done in the most effectual way by establishing the

true basis on which men hold the possessions of earth, namely, as the stewards of Him who owns earth and heaven; and viewing the error from that stand-point, its folly and madness is apparent.

We proceed now, however, to consider the parable in detail. A certain rich man had a steward, whose business was to apply his master's goods to his uses, and protect them from waste or peculation. Accusations, however, strong and well attested, are brought to the master, that his steward is unfaithful, and instead of guarding his lord's wealth from the waste of others, is himself squandering his means in dishonesty. The master, naturally anxious, concerned, and indignant, calls the steward, charges him with his unfaithfulness, and demands an account of his transactions, as he may no longer retain his office if his account be unsatisfactory. The steward, unable to reply to the charges, departs, and getting alarmed at the consequences of his unfaithfulness, and anxious for his future comfort, he seriously asks himself, "What shall I do, for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship." Too closely wedded to knavery to think of what repentance and amendment may do with his master, he only schemes to get a livelihood some other way. He cannot dig, having no strength or inclination for hard labor, and is ashamed to beg. No easy way of getting an honest living occurs to him, but cunning knavery comes to his aid and suggests a plan. "I am resolved," says he, "what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship they may receive me into their houses." See how he works out his scheme. He sits in close conference with one and another of those who owed his lord money; conspiring with them to lessen the sum of their debt on the bond, in the hope that they would return him the favor when he needed it. One debtor he finds owing his lord a hundred measures of oil—"Take thy bill," says he, "and sit down quickly, and write fifty." Another owes a hundred measures of wheat—"Take thy bill," says he to him, "and write four score." And another and another comes and gets his debt lowered, and the cunning scheme prospers, and as we watch it, we can hardly help exclaiming—how clever, how wise!

But now the Divine Teacher breaks in upon our admiration, with a consideration, that, like the touch of Ithuriel's spear, changes the specious show of wisdom to direct folly. "And the lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely"—his lord commended him—his lord forgot his injured, outraged confidence, to hold up his hands in admiration of his cleverness! What a fool then has this schemer been, what folly his wise scheme! His far-seeing wisdom has not taken into account all the length and breadth of his iniquity, and of his ruin. His wise scheme did not take his lord into account. He has been "reckoning without his host." His plan for the future has left out the first and chief concern—the account with his master. He has schemed to avoid labor; if his account be not satisfactory, his lord may "command him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he has to make up the debt." He has planned to avoid begging; if his balance is deficient, and his knavery apparent, his lord "may cast him into prison, and deliver him to the tormentors till payment be made." His business was to secure his lord's favor, to appease his lord in any way and every way, and he has done a clever thing which *will* secure that. Doubtless his lord will be pleased with his scheme to cheat him, and cannot but commend his wisdom.

And yet as we scan his plan more narrowly, how foolish is it in every way. Suppose he escapes from his master's vengeance, what *sure* prospects he has of future comfort. *Doubtless* the debtors who joined with him in cheating his lord will be true to him, and brave the rich man's displeasure to shelter him, and help him out of all his difficulties, for it is the very height of wisdom to cheat honest men and depend upon rogues. *The children of this world are wiser in dealing with their generation than the children of light.*

Such we conceive to be the scope of the parable, and its application is so evident, that we cannot but carry it along with us as we read. The rich man, who has the steward, suggests the Almighty Lord to whom the earth belongs and all its fulness, and those who hold this world's goods are His *stewards*. No hard and grudging master is He, pinching them,

denying them the steward's privileges,\* no troublesome intermeddler is He, requiring daily the account of every penny, but allowing full liberty for discretion in the stewardship. Yet, neither is He altogether indifferent how His goods are administered, for He hath appointed a day when each must render an account of his stewardship. The unjust stewards who cheat and plunder to get means for their own selfish ends, and barter truth, and honour, and heart, and conscience, and worth, and fame, for gold, may go on in their error for a while unchecked, but not unknown to the all-seeing Eye that beholds the evil and the good. And whether heaping up hoards of unrighteous mammon, or squandering it on their lusts, they cannot always be at ease; for a warning conscience will whisper that life cannot always last, that death will come, and their stewardship be ended, and that they must go to give in their account to their Lord. Account, they know, they cannot give. Repent, and amend, and live honestly they will not; forget their danger, they cannot. Mammon they will serve, for that their hearts desire; yet God they must serve, or be for ever lost. So they cast in their minds, "Is there no way of uniting the pleasures of mammon-worship with the safety of God's worship? Can we not *serve* God *with* mammon?"

From the father of lies comes the suggestion—"Give of your gains to pious and charitable purposes, and all will be well. Build the tombs of prophets and righteous men, and doubtless they will share their homes in heaven with you. Give gifts to holy men, and alms to the poor, and in their heavenly habitations they will receive you; for almsgiving is a virtue that cannot pass unrewarded in heaven. Though by hard-hearted covetousness you have heaped up unholy hoards—only leave, when you die, alms enough to bribe heaven-dwellers to take you in." There are sanctimonious Pharisees enough who will ratify such a bargain; needy beggars enough who will give their last blessings for money. Pleasure now, and safety hereafter, surely that is the plan.

But what of the Almighty Lord whose all-seeing eye scans

\* *i.e.*, a competence. (See 1 Cor. ix. 17. "If I do, *willingly*, I have a reward, if not, a steward's privileges are mine.")

the thoughts and intents of the heart. Will the Judge of the poor and needy be pleased with him who robs them of their living? Will the King of Righteousness approve of the scheme to evade His justice? Will the Lord of earth and its fulness look with complaisance on the abuse of His possessions to bribe an entrance for the unholy into heaven? What wisdom to trust saints, or priests, or people, or any one and every one, but the God of all truth!

"Wherefore I say unto you," says Jesus, bringing home the application to every heart, "in remembrance of the great and solemn day of account, of the dread tribunal of justice, and the Judge, terrible in righteousness. Follow that plan, and 'make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations.'"

It is evident that the one indispensable requisite to the proper administration of our stewardship of earthly goods is faithfulness, and faithfulness alone can expect the reward of heaven. It is the same God who entrusts to men the stewardship of earthly and heavenly wealth. And the principle is sound. "He that is faithful in the least, is faithful also in much." He who has shown his faithfulness in dealing with the little perishing things of earth, is best fitted to enjoy the advantage of stewarding the everlasting riches of heaven. So, too, is the principle sound: He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. He who has shown himself unfit to be trusted with the passing things of earth, is still more unfit to be entrusted with the enduring wealth of heaven. And God the Lord of all, shall surely dispose of His eternal riches in wisdom.

If ye have been unfaithful in the unrighteous mammon, who shall commit to your trust the true riches? If ye have been unfaithful in another's, over which for a time you had power, who shall give you that which shall be yours for ever and ever? Serve God faithfully, or look for nought from Him. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Faithfulness, then, in regard to the things of earth, is the lesson of this parable: not merely as justice to man, but as a duty—a service to God.

*The one indispensable requisite for serving God in the*

world's wealth, is faithfulness. Without that, the pursuit of worldly good is a service of mammon. But faithfulness in honestly acquiring the comfort and influence of wealth, and faithfulness in using these comforts, and directing that influence to good and noble ends, as a service to God, makes the commonest and most earthly business a work of God. In such faithfulness the world's business is not worldly, and the greatest wealth is not mammon. He who so faithfully discharges his duty in his worldly business is as truly a servant of God as he who by emphasis is called the minister of God, whose duty it is to win souls to Christ. We would not be supposed to infer that there is no superior worth and sacredness in spiritual things. But what we mean is, that whether engaged in small matters or great, duty is still duty, and it is not according to the greatness of the business in hand, but according to his faithfulness, that a servant, a steward, receives commendation and reward. And although worldly business may be often of a lowly character, yet in it a man may exhibit faithfulness—greater faithfulness it may be—than another in a higher sphere, and so have the greater reward. God has assigned to no man a position where he may not show his fidelity as a servant of God; but in the field or in the market, in the shop or in the school, in the wealthy proprietor's domain or in the poor man's lowly toil, as well as at the author's desk or in the preacher's pulpit, may faithfulness be shown, and the reward of faithfulness secured. And although this lesson may have a special charge to the rich, it is not without a message to the poorest of the poor. A man may show faithfulness in a penny as well as in a pound, and the Great Master in heaven commends men not according to their *possessions* but according to their *faithfulness*. And in the great day of account, when each gives an account of his stewardship, we can well believe that many whose worldly means have been but stinted and scanty, will hear the blessed commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

J. B.



# A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archaeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

## SECTION EIGHTH.—Acts ii. 41—47.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized : and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul : and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common ; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”—Acts ii. 41—47.

SUBJECT :—*The Pentecost the culminating period in the system of Redemption.*

(Continued from page 141.)

**T**WO of the features which we have said characterized this day of Pentecost, this Grand Epoch of the redemptive economy, namely, a new manifestation of the Divine Spirit, and a new order of religious ministry, have already engaged our attention. We now proceed to notice the last, which is—

III. A NEW DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL LIFE. “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized : and the same

day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." As the result of Peter's wonderful sermon, a form of society rises which had never appeared on earth before. New forces act upon the social natures of men, and bring them together from new feelings, and for new engagements, and new purposes. There is a *new* society before us. *New*, at least, in many respects. The *ἐκκλησία* receives new elements, throbs with new impulses, assumes new proportions, sets itself to new functions, and exerts new influences upon the world.

The passage presents several things in relation to this new society.

First: *The incorporating principle of this new society.* What was it that brought those "three thousand souls" into close fellowship with themselves, and with the existing body of Christ's disciples? What was the magnet that drew together and centralized into a loving unity these souls, which a few hours before were so discordant and antagonistic? The answer is at hand. (1) The apostle's *word*. It was that sermon of Peter's that did the work, the sermon which demonstrated to their conviction the Messiahship of Him whom they, by wicked hands, had "crucified and slain." (2) The apostle's *word received*. This word, had it not been received, would have died away in silence, without any effect. They *received* it. They were convinced of its truth, and accepted it as a Divine reality. (3) The apostle's word received *gladly*. "Then they that gladly received his word," &c. They gladly received his word, for whilst his word convinced them of their enormous wickedness, it also assured them of God's readiness to pardon and to save. This word thus received, then, was the uniting power that broke down all social barriers, and made their profoundest sympathies mingle and run in one direction. The Messiahship of Christ which Peter's word now demonstrated, is the rock-truth on which the Church of God is built. "Upon this rock," says Christ, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."\* Observe—

Secondly: *The introductive ceremony to this new society.*

\* See my Homiletic Commentary *in loco*.

"They were baptized." Baptism we regard as a *symbolical* ordinance—an ordinance designed to express a twofold truth of vital moment—the *moral pollution of humanity, and the necessity of an extraneous influence in order to cleanse its stains away.* These truths, these sinners felt under Peter's mighty sermon ; and, as a most seeming and proper thing, they were admitted into communion with the disciples by an impressive symbolic declaration of them. As to the *mode* in which they were baptized, this is a trifle that is only interesting to those sects who live upon such rites. When it is remembered that Jerusalem had only the fountain of Siloam to supply its population with water, and that its supplies were always scanty—that "the three thousand" were baptized in one day which had passed its noon before the operation had commenced, and that the thousands of course included both sexes—it requires a larger amount of credulity than we profess to have to believe that they were all immersed in water. However, what matters it? The mode of the act is nothing, the spirit is everything. Observe—

Thirdly : *The unremitting services of this new society.* "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The day of Pentecost is over, the incorporation of these thousands into the Church has taken place, and Luke continues now to give a history of their subsequent life. "They were," he says, "continuing stedfastly in *the teaching of the apostles, and the fellowship, and in breaking of the bread, and in the prayers.*" \* The article which our translators omitted, stands before each substantive, and gives, therefore, a distinct significance to each. (1) They were *persevering*, for such is the meaning of this word "stedfastly," in *the teaching.* The word "doctrine" does not mean the thing taught, but the act of teaching. They were constant in their attendance on the teaching of the apostles. After Peter's great sermon, he had much more to say ; and after their conversion, they had much more to learn. This new society was a society of

\* This reading we consider more true to the meaning than our version.

*students.* They "inquired" in the house of the Lord. They regularly attended *the* teaching, as distinguished from all other teachings of men, and as designating, perhaps, the highest teaching of the apostles. What teaching was theirs? What a privilege to study in the apostolic college. (2) They were persevering in *the* fellowship. They appreciated the communion of saints. Meetings for mutual counsel, exhortations, and spiritual intercourse, they constantly attended. They regarded themselves as members of a brotherhood whose rules they were bound to obey, and whose interest they were bound to promote. In this fellowship, like the saints of old, they "*spake often one to another.*" They considered one another "*to provoke unto love and to good works.*" They exhorted "*one another daily.*" They endeavored to "*edify one another,*" and, perhaps, they confessed their "*faults one to another.*" There is a blessed fellowship in the true Church. (3) They were persevering in *the* breaking of bread. "And in breaking of bread." Whether this refers to the eucharist (the Lord's Supper), or the *agapæ* (love feasts), or their common social meal, is a question still in dispute amongst critics. The name, however, of this service, "the breaking of bread," inclines us to believe that the Lord's Supper is meant; for it is said, "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and *brake it.*" And with His disciples whom He joined on their way to Emmaus, He was known to them by the "*breaking of bread.*" "The bread of the Hebrew," says a modern expositor, "was made commonly into cakes, thin, hard, and brittle, so that it was broken instead of being cut. Hence, to denote intimacy or friendship, the phrase 'to break bread together,' would be very expressive in the same way as the Greeks denoted it, by 'drinking together' (*συμπόσιον*)." It has been supposed that the Lord's Supper was observed once a week by the early Christians. (Matt. xxvi. 26; Luke xxiv. 30; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 23.) (4) They were persevering in *the* prayers. The prayers here, designate, we think, certain services for prayer which were recognized amongst them—prayer-meetings or prayer-services. They were a praying community.

Thus much for their services. "The whole," to use the language of another, "may be summed up as consisting in apostolical teaching, mutual communion, and common prayer." Observe—

Fourthly: *The distinguishing spirit of this new society.* The spirit that animated the converts who formed this new brotherhood of souls was distinguished (1) By reverence. "Fear came upon every soul." Whilst they were profoundly happy, there was no frivolous hilarity in their natures, a reverential awe had settled on their being. The cause of this reverence is expressed in the words, "many wonders and signs were done by the apostles." They felt that God was near, that His hand was on them. (φόβος!) A deep feeling of solemnity and wondrous awe pervaded their minds; like the old patriarch, who, roused from his dream, felt "how awful is this place." The spirit was distinguished (2) By generosity. "And all that believed were together, and had all things common: and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." They were *together*; not, perhaps, locally, for no house could contain the multitude, but spiritually. They were one in spirit, they were together in soul. What one felt, all felt. They wept with those that wept; they rejoiced with those that rejoiced. Like Christ and His apostles, they had all things common; they put their property into a common stock, "and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Here is generosity. Selfishness has no place in this *new* community. The new commandment is supreme. The benevolence which inspired them was a benevolence that *made sacrifices*. "They sold their possessions and goods." The love of property in them gives way to the love of man. The law of social Christianity enjoins the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak, the rich to help the poor, and all to bear each other's burden, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

*This benevolence adjusted itself to the occasion.* The circumstances of the persons assembled on this occasion required such an effort as this. Many of them came from distant regions, and who had come unprepared to settle down in Jerusalem, and many of them, too, of the poorer

classes of society, who had not themselves the means of subsistence. The benevolence of those who had property, therefore, was called out to meet the case. There is no reason to regard the community of goods here—a state of things rising up to meet a crisis—as a *precedent* binding on future times. The terms of the narrative authorize not such an universal application. The Gospel everywhere recognizes the distinction of the rich and the poor; and the diversity in the instincts and habits of mankind, would render a community of property, as a permanent and lasting institution, an impossibility. The spirit was distinguished (3) By gladness. “Did eat their meat with gladness.” Their hearts exulted with joy. The rich were happy, for their benevolence was gratified in giving. The poor were happy, for their hearts glowed with gratitude in receiving. All were happy in themselves, happy with each other, because they were happy in God. The spirit was distinguished—(4) By simplicity of spirit. There was “singleness of heart.” There was no pride, no ostentation, no self-seeking, no hypocrisy amongst them; but all were exquisitely child-like in spirit. All were transparent, they saw each other’s souls, and in each other trusted. The spirit was distinguished—(5) By religiousness. “Praising God.” This is not so much a particular in description as a pregnant summary of the whole. As if the historian had said, “in all they praised God; whether they ate or drank, whatsoever they did, they did all to His glory.” Worship is not a particular service, but a spirit that inspires all services. Observe—

Fifthly : *The blessed condition of this new society.* (1) *Their influence was great.* “They had favor with all the people.” Favor, not with a class—not with priests, Pharisees, Sadducees—but with (τὸν λαόν) all the people. Their spirit and conduct commanded the esteem of the people around them. (2) *Their growth was constant.* They were not a declining community, nor a stationary one. They were *daily* increasing. (4) *Their accession was Divine.* “The Lord added daily.” He only can add true men to the Church. (4) *Their existence was secure.* “Such as should be saved.”

# Gems of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*The World without a Night.*

“And there shall be no night there.”—Rev. xxii. 5.

Analysis of *Volume the Six Hundred and Forty-sixth.*

**F**OR many months now, I have engaged your attention on alternate Sabbath evenings with the “Memorable Nights of the Bible.” I shall close the series to-night by an endeavor to lift your thoughts to a world where there is no night. The last two chapters of this book is a grand symbolic description of such a world. The political earthquakes, the social convulsions, the religious persecutions, and all the storms of this world’s tumultuous history recorded in the other parts of this book are now over, and the apostle takes us into the serene and sunny scenes of the heavenly state. The old heavens have departed. All the dead from ocean and from land have been raised ; the sleep of centuries is broken ; the judgment has passed ; the long-dreaded day is a thing of history now ; the separation of the wicked and the righteous has taken place ; and the destinies of all are fixed, righteously and irrevocably, for ever. The apostle gives us the Eternal Heaven of the good under the figure of a city, and the city is glorious in every respect.

First : *Glorious in its structure.* Immensely large. (Chap. xxi. 16.) It was *twelve thousand furlongs* every way. According to the description of it, it would seem that the four sides of the city approaches to fifteen hundred miles in length ; and that the length, and breadth, and height are equal. A representation of magnitude this, so transcending all our experience, in order to impress us with its wondrous amplitude. According to the measuring line of sects, heaven is a small place. I take the “golden reed” of the angel as the true gauge.

Its materials are the most precious and costly. The foundations of the walls of the city were adorned with every precious stone, "and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Nothing on earth to be compared to this city in its size and in its materials.

Secondly : *Glorious in its situation.* Where is it founded ? From what site does it lift its majestic form ? It is built on a site regarded as the Paradise or Eden of the universe. Through its golden streets rolls the pure river of life, "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The river that rolls through the city in this Paradise, unlike the old Paradise of Adam, comes from the throne of God and of the Lamb. The Tree of Life that grows in this Paradise is multiplied to two. It is not, as in the former Paradise, in the middle of the garden, but is on either side of the street along the river ; "so fruitful, that it bears every month ; so versatile, that its produce is of twelve sorts, applicable to every want and taste ; and so accessible, that, instead of being protected by a flaming sword, it stands in the public streets."

Thirdly : *Glorious in its circumstances.* All evil is excluded from its precincts, and all good replete within its boundaries.

Such is a bare outline of the symbolic description which is given of the heavenly world in the context. We must now confine our attention to a few thoughts which the text suggests in relation to it. "There shall be no night there."

I. The negation suggests that it is a realm EVER CLEAR IN VISION. Night clouds our vision so that we see but little, and that little but indistinctly. Night draws her veil over nature, and hides from mortals the world in which they live. Darkness is, therefore, the symbol of *ignorance*. "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision ;



and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine ; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them." Micah iii. 6. But in a world without a night, a world of unclouded sunshine, the vision will be clear.

First : *There will be no error in our conception of things there.* Far enough am I from believing that we shall ever see *all* things in heaven. There will always be universes lying beyond the ken of the most penetrating eye. The elevation that lies to-day at the utmost boundary of an angel's horizon, he will reach in the course of time, and one day stand upon its lofty brow. But from the towering apex other elevations he will see, lying far away, and concealing the Infinite beyond. Thus it will be for ever, the finite intellect will never grasp the Infinite. Nor do I believe that different minds will ever have *exactly* the same view of things, see things in exactly the same light. This seems to me impossible, from the fact that no two spirits are exactly alike, nor can any two occupy exactly the same points of observation. Our views will necessarily be relative. They will be true to us, but not necessarily true to others. God alone can see the whole of a thing. We only see sections and sides. Not only does it appear impossible, but undesirable. Diversity of view gives a freshness and charm to society. A city where all the citizens had precisely the same views on the same subjects, would be characterized by a drowsy monotony. A loving comparison of views, a generous debate, a magnanimous controversy, are amongst the blessings and charms of social life. Still, our range of vision, though limited, and our views, though relative, will be *clear* and *accurate*. Here, in a world of nights, our most correct conception of things are clouded more or less with error. We see now through a "glass darkly," says Paul. The glass he refers to was not like our window glass, admitting no obstruction to sight, but a transparent horn. How different the landscape—looked at through such a thick medium—as looked at directly with a clear, strong eye ! As to the man whose eyes Christ had just opened, and who,

unaccustomed to light, regarded men as trees walking, so we here, in this land of shadows, have distorted visions of those objects which are brought directly under our notice. Not so in that nightless world ; what we see we shall see clearly, no haze will rest upon our prospect.

In the world without a night there will be—

Secondly : *No doubt as to the path of duty.* Here, what clouds often rest upon the path we ought to take. " If a man walk in the night he stumbleth." Yes, we stumble here ; even after long and prayerful deliberation on the steps, we often make mistakes. The depravities of our nature, the selfish and carnal inclinations of our hearts, often throw the darkness of night upon that course of life which is true and just. But in that world without a night, eternal sunshine will settle on the path of duty ; it will lie straight before us, and we shall move on with the steps of certitude. God's Will, will radiate on everything without, and will express itself in every impulse within.

II. The negation suggests that it is a realm EVER PURE IN CHARACTER. In the night, great sins are generally committed. The thief and the assassin go forth with their stealthy tread on their mission of wickedness, in the night ; the gambler, the debauchee, and the serfs of carnal appetites, meet, and hold their revelries in the night. " They that be drunken be drunken in the night." The prince of darkness and all his ghostly legions win their most terrible victories in the gloom and the silence of nocturnal hours. The day is the emblem and the minister of purity. How pure is the light ! In Heaven all is pure. There are the holy angels whose natures, through the ages of their being, have never been clouded with one impure thought or touched by the thrill of one unholy passion. The redeemed of all ages are there. They have had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. They are without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Christ, whose love for purity was so unconquerable, that He gave His life's blood to cleanse the

pollution of the world, is in the midst of its throne. He who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all, who charges the angels with folly, and declares the heavens unclean in His sight, fills with the sunshine of His presence the whole of that blessed scene. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

III. The negation implies that it is a realm **EVER BEAUTIFUL IN ASPECT**. Darkness hides the beauty of the world, but light is the creator and minister of beauty. All the variegated colors of the summer's landscape we owe to the sun; and all the exquisite forms of life owe their existence to his renewing power. The sun is Nature's great painter. All the pictures of loveliness that charm us as we walk the galleries of life, have been photographed by his smiles and tinged by his hues. What, then, will be the beauty of a world where there is no night—a world of perpetual sunshine? All *natural* beauties will be there. The shores and the seas, the meads and the mountains, the rivers and the ravines—all, in fact, beneath, around, above—will be one grand universe of beauty. All *artistic* beauties will be there. The very instinct of genius is to invent, imitate, and create, and there genius will flourish in perfection. May it not be that numbers will there be employed in copying the forms of loveliness around them with pencils more delicate, lines more life-like, hands more skilful, than our Raphaels and Rubens, our De Vincis and Correggios? May it not be that numbers will be there employed in weaving the sounds of Nature into melodies more soul-stirring and divine than ever struck the lyre of our Handels or Mozarts? May it not be that numbers will be there hymning their praises in strains of seraphic poetry, compared with which the epics of Milton and the lyrics of Cowper are but the vapid fancies of childhood? Genius, there, will undoubtedly be active, and all her productions will be

distinguished by the highest perfection of beauty. All *moral* beauties will be there. The beauty of holiness, the beauty of the Lord, will adorn every spirit. All will be endowed with those attributes of moral loveliness that will command the admiration of each and all. Thus all will rejoice in each other, and all rejoice in the Lord whence all their beauty came.

IV. The negation implies that it is a realm of EVER UN-CHECKED PROGRESS. Night checks the progress of *life*. The processes of life, it is true, go on in the night, but they are slow and feeble. Life cannot bear the darkness long; its pulse grows feeble under its ebon reign. Its tide ebbs under its cold breath. Take a vigorous blooming plant from the light, and shut it up in the dark, how soon it will lose its vitality, become delicate, colourless, and die. Were our sun to shine on without setting from year to year on this earth, who could say how high the tide of life would rise in every living thing. In the world where there is "no night," there will be no check to the *advance of life*. The vital energies will always be increasing. Sinew and soul, character and conscience, will be ever growing in force. "From strength to strength," all these proceed. No blight to wither, no shadow to chill there. But all the influences that play around existence there, inspire, invigorate, and uplift. Night checks the progress of *labor*. We go forth unto our labor until the evening; then night shuts us in. We retire to unconsciousness and inaction. Are there not twelve hours in the day? "If any man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world; but if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no life in him. The night cometh when no man can work." But in a world where there is "no night," there is no checking of labor. Our range of action would be unrestrained. We shall be always abounding in the work of the Lord.

V. The negation implies that it is a realm EVER JOYOUS IN SPIRIT. Darkness is depressing. Hence it is often used as the emblem of misery; the scene where the wicked are

punished is spoken of as "outer darkness." Even the irrational creatures around us feel the depressing influence of a gloomy day. Under the dark clouds and murky sky, the cattle cease to gambol on the hills, and the fowls of heaven cease their music in the groves. All feel the pressure of darkness. Light is the condition and emblem of joy. A bright day sets the world to music. What happiness, then, must there be in a world where there is no night. In what does its happiness consist? The context answers the question. *The absence of all evil.* No pain, no sorrow, no death, no hunger, no thirst, no temple, no night. *The presence of all good.* The river of life, the tree of life, companionship with the holy, fellowship with God, oneness with Christ. This is Heaven.

Such are the ideas suggested by this nightless world. It is a scene where the vision is ever clear, where the character is ever pure, where the aspect is ever beautiful, where the life is ever advancing, where the joy is ever rising. We say *ever*, for there is "no night" there. The sun never sinks beneath the hills, nor does a cloud ever intercept his rays. Up in the meridian for ever, he shines, flooding the universe for ever with brightness. How great the soul for which such a destiny is prepared! Art thou a candidate, my brother, for this blessed world? The world in which thou livest is leaving thee. Those that link thee here are falling one by one. Thy home, perhaps now so sweet, will soon grow desolate, and if thou remainest long thou wilt feel thyself alone here, a stranger in a strange world; and that not for long. Thou must leave it. Yet thou must live, live when stars have gone out, and suns are burnt to ashes. Art thou a candidate for the nightless world? Oh, that the view of this heaven would entrance thee to-night. Holy Jerusalem; Home of the sainted dead; Paradise of the beautiful; Throne of the Eternal; break forth now from the dark heavens of our depraved souls, that we may have such a view of thy matchless grandeur that shall make us feel how little this life is, and how sublime the destiny which we may reach.

There is a world where all is night; a sunless, moonless, *starless night*. God deliver you from this night.

SUBJECT :—*The Wicked Husbandmen; or, the efforts of Mercy to redeem, and the appearance of Justice to punish.*

"Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet."—Matt. xxi. 33—46.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-seventh.

**I**NEXHAUSTIBLE was the mental wealth of Christ. His mind was an overflowing fountain of knowledge. "*Hear another parable,*" says He. Already they had heard from His lips much more than they desired, yet not half what they needed, and nothing compared with what He had to impart. Students in the school of Christ, for centuries or millenniums indefinitely, must expect to hear another parable from their Great Master. Luke represents this parable as having been spoken to the *people*; Matthew and Mark as having been addressed to the Pharisees; but the fact that the former evangelist mentions (Luke xx. 19) the "chief priests and

scribes" as listeners on the occasion, obviates the apparent discrepancy.

The two great subjects which the Heavenly Artist throws on this parabolic canvas are—the efforts of Mercy to redeem, and the appearance of Justice to punish. The materials of this parable are taken from the beautiful passage of Isaiah v. 1—7.

I. THE EFFORTS OF MERCY TO REDEEM. The "householder" is the Great God, who is here represented as mercifully employing means for the cultivation of His vineyard. The parable suggests several thoughts concerning those merciful efforts.

First: *They were abundant.* The abundance appears (1) From the favorable condition in which the vine was planted. "*The householder hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen.*" We are not sure that these separate figures are intended to express separate ideas, probably they are used only to give a full expression to the wonderful care which the householder employed in order to secure all the conditions of fruitfulness. The abundance appears (2) From the agents employed to secure its cultivation. "*He let it out to husbandmen.*" The "husbandmen" are supposed to represent the regularly established priesthood. They were appointed for the very purpose of taking care of God's vineyard. (Malachi ii. 7, Ezekiel xxxiv. 2.) From Aaron down they covenanted with God to do this; it was their solemn obligation. Beside the husbandmen, there was another class of agents employed in this work of cultivation, called "his servants." "When the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it." "How, it may be asked," says Trench, "are these 'servants' to be distinguished from the husbandmen? Exactly in this; that the servants, that is the prophets and other more eminent ministers of God in His theocracy, *were sent*—being raised up at particular times, having particular missions, and their

power lying in their mission ; while the others were the more regular and permanently established ecclesiastical authorities, whose power lay in the very constitution of the theocracy itself." From time to time, prophets and special ministers of heaven had been sent forth by God to warn, instruct, and comfort His chosen people. Mercy then was abundant in its means to secure fruitfulness in the Jewish people, and well might the great householder say, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" (Isa. v. 4.) If the efforts of mercy to redeem were so abundant in Jewish times, how much more so in these later times? In what a vineyard are we placed, and how numerous the agents which Heaven employs for our spiritual cultivation? These efforts of mercy to redeem were—

Secondly : *Outraged.* "*The husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.*" When these were killed, other servants were sent ; and they shared the same fate. Last of all He sent His Son, and they slew Him. "They beat one," (Jer. xxxvii. 15). "They killed another," (Jer. xxvi. 23). "They stoned another," (2 Chron. xxiv. 21). Christ refers (Matt. xxiii 37) to their conduct towards His servants in His wail over Jerusalem :—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee," &c. "Others had trial of cruel mockings," &c. (Heb. xi. 36.) A sight of astounding depravity this—men outraging the efforts of mercy to save them ; yet, alas, a common sight. These efforts of mercy to redeem were—

Thirdly : *Persevering.* After the first servants whom the householder sent—his loyal, loving servants—were beaten, killed, and stoned, he sent others ; nor did it cease here. He persevered, and made of all sacrifices the most stupendous. "*Last of all he sent unto them his son.*" Both Mark and Luke express it in terms more touching and striking. In the former it is said, "Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved son, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son." And in the latter it is said, "Then



said the lord of the vineyard, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son, it may be that they will reverence him when they see him." Here is mercy persevering, to the eternal wonder of the universe. The other leading subject on this parabolic canvas is—

II. THE APPEARANCE OF JUSTICE TO PUNISH. "*When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto these husbandmen?*" The following remarks are suggested.

First: *The crime for punishment was immense.* What ingratitude, injustice, cruelty, rebellion, are involved in the conduct of these husbandmen in martyring the servants of the householder, and at last putting his only beloved son to death. Truly the Jewish people had filled up the measure of their iniquity.

Secondly: *The time for punishment is acknowledged.* "*When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?*" It is assumed that he will come. The householder having left the care of his vineyard with the husbandmen, *went into a far country.* He had left the system of things he had established to go on. He did not appear in person amongst them. But his return from the "far country" was certain. He would come to look after his property, and settle with his servants. A time of settlement was fixed, and all understood it. Such a settling time comes at death in every man's history. Such a settling time comes to humanity at the end of this world's history.

Thirdly: *The justice of the punishment is felt.* "*What will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.*" *Κακὸς κακῶς*, an emphatic alliteration, not easily conveyed in English. "He will badly destroy those bad men;" or, "Miserably destroy those miserable men." Thus, unwittingly, they pronounced a terrible punishment on themselves, dictated by their own consciences. It is often thus with sinners. David and Nathan are striking examples.

(2 Sam. xii. 5—7.) The Great Judge will make the sinner pronounce his own doom.

Fourthly : *The nature of the punishment is terrible.* It is suggested that it will consist (1) In the utter frustration of the sinner's purposes. "*The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner.*" The Son the husbandmen slew, becomes the Sovereign Judge of the universe. What an element of anguish will this be to see that very cause which it has been the purpose of our life to destroy, becoming the grandest power in the universe, &c. It is suggested that it will consist (2) In the utter loss of all our possessions. "*Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you.*" The vineyard shall be lost for ever. It is suggested that it will consist (3) In present injury and ultimate ruin. "*Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken ; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*" Those builders were falling on the stone now, and bruising themselves, but ultimately the stone would fall on them and grind them into powder. Their ruin would be complete. It is said in Luke, that the people exclaimed "*God forbid*" when they heard this doom pronounced upon those here called the husbandmen and the builders, and well might they exclaim "*God forbid,*" for it is overwhelmingly terrible.

Brother, redemptive mercy is busy with thee now. It has placed thee in a beautiful vineyard, and favored thee with every facility for the production of fruit. How art thou acting ? Art thou rejecting the overtures of mercy, and sinning against the arrangements of grace ? If so, be it known unto thee that when the Lord of the vineyard shall come, when Justice shall appear, better thou hadst never been born.

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SUBJECT :—*The Communion of Saints.*—No. I.

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."—Heb. xii. 22, 23.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-eighth.

**T**HE body of Christ is one. Part, indeed, is on earth ; part in the spirit-land ; part has the battle to fight, the foe to win, the victory to gain ; part has fought, and bled, and won. The Church on earth is militant ; the Church in heaven is triumphant ; but still 'tis one Church. Death cannot part them, for they are one in Christ. (Eph. i. 10.)

At times it is well for us to call to our minds the Church invisible ; it were unwise to forget *altogether* the countless hosts of those who have crossed the flood. And so to-day \* we are bidden to cast our eyes down the long vista of the years gone by, and with exultant hearts to view the glorious lives of Christian heroes. We are told that with these heroes—so humble, yet so bold ; so despised, yet so exalted ; so self-devoted, and so great—with these we have a communion, with these we are one. Their feet, indeed, have passed away from earth. Through sorrow and blood, in fire and fierce torment, in patience and love, they left the earth they blessed ; but ever and for ever they are one with Christ's Church. Baptized once into His mystic body, they are members *still*, though exalted now to meet their Head in heaven.

Seek we then, some thoughts about communion of saints ; with saints that have been, and with saints that are. Let us put ourselves in sympathy with those who have left us rich legacies ; let us learn lessons of charity to all who are in Christ's Church, but who may yet not be in the narrow circle in which we hedge ourselves in, a circle which we often mistake, and put in the stead of that Catholic Church which is *the* Church, which is Christ's body.

\* Preached on All Saints' Day, 1863.

We have, then, an outward communion with saints, because we are baptized with water and admitted thus into Christ's outward Church. And shall we deem this a light thing? Think who have shared with us in this. Go through the ages of the Church. Think of a peaceful Clement, a martyred Ignatius, a stern Tertullian, an earnest Augustine, a venerable Bede, a saintly Herbert, a Ridley, a Latimer, a Cranmer, a Martyn, a Whately. Think of these, and hosts like these, and say,—Is it nought to share with these, even though it be but in outward symbol, in sacramental rite? Think of all who in monastic cell, or in crowded courts, by the taper's light, or in the busy light, have worked their holy work. Think of those who in battle shock or peaceful walk have fought the Christian fight. Think of these, and say,—Is not even *this* communion—outward though it be—is not this a privilege of privileges, a blessed bond linking you to right noble comrades? Call we thus ever to mind all the good and holy lives past and present; and then, in firm trust on a Father's love, a Saviour's death, and the Spirit's grace, resolve that henceforth no thought of our hearts, no utterance of our lips, no deed of our lives, shall be unworthy of that sacramental army who were and are our brothers in Christ. And that our strength fail not in the fight, let us seek in that *higher symbol* of communion—the Lord's Supper I mean—seek thence renewal of our strength, and thus afresh join ourselves to all the sacred host; for in that Supper is the *second outward symbol* of that great communion which links together Christ's fighting and triumphant warriors.

Think not lightly of this. I say nothing now of its Divine institution; I say nothing now of its great blessings; I say nothing now of its other spiritual significances. I speak only of it as a mark of that communion of saints of which I speak. From this view, reckon it at its full value and its true meaning. Call to mind the early Christians meeting in fear and trembling before daybreak to share in the tokens of the Body and Blood of Christ. Call to mind martyrs going from its bread and wine to fire and faggot, wild beast and sword.

Think of those who in their dying moments have partaken of its holy mysteries, and then boldly passed over the border into the dark land of death. Sum up all in one view, and then come to this Supper for strength, and wisdom and renewal ; then remember that, in it and by it, you take your stand with those who at all times of the Church have received the bread or tasted the cup.

But these outward symbols of communion, great, venerable, hallowed as they are, are more even than this ; for they are the vantage ground by which we mount to a communion still higher—a communion which gives their truest meaning, their truest value to the two sacraments. I mean the *communion of Spirit* ; or, rather, of *the Spirit*, as St. Paul says to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

Wide as is the communion of those bound by a common share and partaking in the sacraments—taking in all from those who were baptized at Pentecost to the babe baptized to-day—the *communion in the Spirit* is wider far. Closest, it is true, the communion is between those bound by the sacramental bond ; for the full dispensation of the Spirit was not till Pentecost. True, that those who faithfully and humbly partake of the sacraments may be most fully assured that *they* are members of the spiritual communion ; still, while the Christian dispensation has fuller manifestations of the Spirit than the Jewish had—even as the Jewish had fuller than the Gentiles—while this is true, and so the spiritual communion of Christians is fuller, wider, and truer than any of old, still, let us never fix the limits of our spiritual communion at the beginning of the Christian era.

If without the Holy Ghost there is nothing good, wise, holy—then all that was holy, and wise, and good among the Jews was of Him ; and our communion must take in them. Nay, more ; if there was in the heathen any glimmering left of purity, and truth, and goodness—and shall we dare to say there was not ?—if there were any gropings after the truth ; if in any Gentile breasts man's fallen nature tried to rise and shake itself to life—this groping, these efforts, this imperfect

good must, so far as it was good, have been of the Divine Spirit, and that Spirit is one.

To-day, then, thinking of our spiritual communion, let us widen our range. Whatever there was in Abraham of undoubting faith, in Moses of sublime thought and high enterprise ; whatever in David of sacred confidence and sweet poesy ; whatever in Isaiah of rapt contemplation and prophetic gaze ; in Daniel of fearless confession and wise statesmanship ; whatever of good or wise or holy in these and all their countrymen—all came from that same Spirit which we partake ; and we, in our turn, if we seek it and work for it, may receive of that same Spirit, strength, and wisdom, and holiness. With these heroes, and wise men, and patriots, we are one ; bound to them for ever in the communion of one and the same Spirit, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Turn, now, to other nations, to other lands. Was there in Socrates aught of purity and self-devotion and love of truth ; in Plato were there imaginations high, clear thoughts in prose-like poetry ; in Persius, spiritual sight ; in Brutus pure patriotism—whatever there was in these and other ancients of right and purity and truth, it must have been of the Eternal Spirit ; and with these great ones, we, baptized in one Spirit, receiving of that Spirit, may claim communion *in Spirit*, may claim real fellowship. And from Pentecost till now in what souls has the same Spirit breathed and wrought and moved ! To what great deeds and noble work led on ! Think for yourselves ; think of all the heroes, wise men, loving hearts, and chaste lives, since then. Remember as you think, that the Spirit they had you have ; that you may have Him in whatever measure you seek Him ; that the more you have of Him, the closer, the more real, the more living is your communion with all the greatness, all the purity, all the holiness, that ever worked on this earth. Think, too, that in whatever respect you are acting against what you know to be the direction of that Spirit—so far you are *wilfully* and *by your own act* cutting yourselves off from any

true real communion, not only with goodness, purity, and truth in the abstract, but from all communion with all the good, and wise, and true men that have ever lived or are now living. For, remember, that no outward communion by the holy sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, no communion in mere thought and fancy, no pretended communion of membership or Church bond will avail us one whit unless we will allow ourselves to be guided in our thoughts, words and acts, to be guided in our outward and inner lives by the Holy Ghost, by the one Eternal Spirit who has been the moving power to all high thought, to all noble action.

To sum up all. Think much of your baptism ; by it you were made one in fellowship with all who ever received it. Come ever to the table of the Lord's Supper. Look upon it as keeping up that communion, wrought in baptism, between you and the body of Christ. Seek much of the Spirit, the very bond of perfectness, the Creator of all true communion, the Giver of all wise, and holy, and loving life.

Last of all, live lives worthy of the innumerable host with whom your communion is ; work up into action all their wisdom ; think over, and try to attain unto, their holiness ; live for the good of the world ; live, so that in ages to come generations who shall be baptized, as you have been, into this communion, seeing your footsteps on the sands of time, may take heart in sorrow or in pain, and struggle on, till at last full communion shall be realized in the presence of the Eternal, who ever liveth, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

F. HEPPENSTALL, B.A.



## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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WHEN about to examine a passage of Scripture, the student should be on his guard against interference from pre-conceived opinions. A subtle element of untrustworthy doctrine permeates the atmosphere, and is ever ready to insinuate itself so as to vitiate or hinder the perception of Biblical meanings. We should come to Scripture, not for proofs of some favourite opinions, but to learn what Scripture says, whatever that may be. If a friend had undertaken to examine the contents of a cabinet of curiosities, and to give an orderly description of them, it would not tend to establish our confidence in his skill if he began by drawing up a classified list of what he expected to find, or thought it possible he might find therein. We should probably remonstrate in manner somewhat like this :—"My dear sir, would it not be better to wait until you know what is in the cabinet? All you need is careful examination and description. Your present method will tend to incline you to accommodate what you find to your list; and the result will be unsatisfactory. Let your catalogue conform to the cabinet, not the cabinet to your catalogue." So it may be said to the student of theology. Do not take it for granted that any particular passage teaches some favorite or familiar opinion. Even if the terms in which that opinion is customarily expressed are found in the passage—yea, and if the passage is often used in proof thereof—it may happen that after all, instead of supporting this, it teaches the very opposite. When the words of the passage are carefully weighed, the context



and the whole drift of the writing, with the occasion, well considered, we shall be in a better position for the discovery of the meaning, and may find it to be something wholly unlike what in first haste we might be tempted to suppose. Instances are not rare, in which passages have put upon them meanings of which the writers never thought; and there are cases, even, in which passages are cited in proof of the very opinion against which the writer is arguing.

When the meaning of a passage or passages has been duly ascertained and carefully expressed, we have arrived at a *doctrine*. The sum of such doctrines drawn from the Scriptures—supposing that it could be fully done—would constitute the whole of revealed theology. The doctrines ascertained are to be *classified* according to resemblance and difference; likeness being the condition of association, unlikeness of separation. Just as in Natural History, various degrees of likeness and unlikeness will give rise to various orders of division. Supposing the classification effected, we shall be in possession of a *system*.

A system is not necessarily *complete*. It is a whole made up of parts standing together in mutual relation, but not necessarily a whole in the sense of completeness. Some of the parts may be wanting. By cutting off in a certain manner one of the angles of a square, you may obtain a trapezium, which is a whole consisting of triangular parts, but not a whole as the complete and symmetrical square. We speak of a system of botany and of a system of astronomy, but neither is complete. The stellar universe extends indefinitely beyond the reach of our telescopes, and the stars and nebulae which are within our observation we know comparatively little. Astronomy as a science is never complete, but a boundless field of novelty ever stimulates the inquiry of successive generations. So no one has ever pretended either to a knowledge of all species of plants, or to a complete acquaintance with those which have been discovered. In every natural science there are gaps waiting to be filled, suggestions of remote correspondences awakening

expectation as yet unsatisfied, unlooked-for phenomena for which discoveries in other departments of the field have left us unprepared, and requiring on their appearance a new adjustment of theory.

Nor must the student expect to find a complete system of theology in the Bible. There is a high probability, nearly approaching certainty, that such does not exist there ; and the fact that we have not ascertained, nor are likely to ascertain, the actual contents of Scripture, removes us a step further from the prospect of completeness. The Bible, like nature, is inexhaustible. Although, most certainly, truth itself has integrity and symmetry, yet it can be received in entirety into no finite mind. The notion that it has been fully consigned to a book in human language is simply monstrous. The more we consider it, the more impossible does it appear. Heaven has a dialect proper to heavenly mysteries. When Paul "was caught up into paradise, he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." 2 Cor. xii. 4. Whether we believe with Clement of Alexandria, Theophylact, and Archbishop Whately, that the words *ἀρρητα ῥήματα* and *οὐκ ἔξον* mean that "the ideas conveyed to him were such as he could not by any powers of human language convey to another," or, with others, that the attempt to convey them would be impious, makes but little difference. But even supposing it for a moment possible for truth to be fully written in a book to be read by men, it were unavailing for our instruction, since all but a very limited portion would, by the weakness of our faculties, be placed beyond our reach. It could answer no purpose but to call forth our humility, which purpose is sufficiently answered by the present Bible. We are reduced therefore to a limited revelation. But a limited revelation is necessarily mysterious, by reason of the infinite relations of what is known to what is unknown. Theology, like natural history, has its chasms and its fragmentary phenomena ; and the theologian, like the student of nature, must expect disappointments and surprises.

This necessary incompleteness of revelation cannot be too much insisted on, since the overlooking of it has occasioned evils which for centuries have vitiated theology. The mind delights in finish, is impatient of waiting, and the Baconian lesson of calm philosophic suspense is apparently one of the last which it learns. As if revelation were complete, men have undertaken symmetrical edifices of doctrine. The basis, however, consists of principles of metaphysics—possibly or probably now obsolete—mingled with others, which are gathered from the Scripture, or received by tradition. Taking it for granted that the rest of Scripture must correspond with the deductions of their logic, they have proceeded with confidence, and finished their work without a flaw. The dweller in this house understands and can explain all things. For him mystery is no more. The thinker outside has only this objection,—That it is built with heterogenous materials which cannot cohere, and must therefore crumble to dust when searched by fire or shaken by the storm.

A similar procedure is sometimes the result of bias. Men with certain tendencies seize on a class of texts which agree, or seem to agree, with their prepossessions. Other texts are explained away by standard methods of the school; and others still, of more stubborn nature, are ignored altogether. Men with opposite tendencies cherish the texts which the others have maltreated, but only to injure in like manner, and according to fixed traditional methods, those which the opposite party cherish. The members of each party believe themselves to be in possession of a well-reasoned "complete system of Divinity," to which facts correspond—a key to the universe. Meanwhile, the true theologian commits himself to neither party, nor dallies with a timid eclecticism. Heedless of the glosses of partisans, he surveys both sides of revelation with the grateful wonder of faith, believing it to be the part as well of the philosopher as of the Christian to refrain from distorting by ingenuity what silly logic is unable otherwise to harmonize.

Whether prompted by haste or prejudice, those speculative

theologians sacrifice the comprehensiveness of truth for a fallacious appearance of completeness. When a class of texts is unfairly explained or neglected on account of their apparent divergence from another class of texts, the favorite as well as the injured texts will suffer. Their utterances are delivered alone, without the natural corrective accompaniment. Thus the fulness of their truth is lost, and they are in a measure falsified. He, therefore, who takes revelation as it is, and looks at truth fairly on all sides, will learn much more than the man who for whatever reason, favors a portion to which the rest is made to conform. The partial and hasty theorizer has a fragment of truth which he fancies to be the universe. The sound theologian, conscious of his own ignorance, and knowing that he is surrounded with mysteries, interrogates the Bible with reverent caution, climbs ever higher by its direction, and finds that his wider horizon embraces both new peaks of light and new valleys of darkness.



## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

*First Sunday after Easter.*

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—  
1 John v. 4.

Now that we have been called upon to contemplate our Lord's death, and have been assured of His joyful and glorious resurrection, the Epistle of this day seasonably teaches us the efficacy of faith in Him. *It overcometh the world.* Our life here is a conflict. We are surrounded by foes—powerful, crafty, and persevering. If we are overcome, our souls are lost; if we prove victors, we enjoy salvation. Thus is it

with individuals. The Church of Christ here, is also to be thought of as a Church militant. The City of God is ever at war with the Kingdom of Darkness. Her history, hitherto, is that of a series of victories; and her Lord has declared that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against her*. But whether in the case of individuals or of the Church, the principle of warfare and the means of victory are the same. Every success is achieved by faith. Faith, which is essential to Christianity, is essentially and necessarily victorious. It seems to be weak and dependent, but its very weakness is irresistible might; for it relies on Omnipotence, and is joined to the arm of the Living God. The moment that faith is allowed to rest, and to yield to weapons of our own devising, the adversary begins to prevail. In this warfare, it is well that we should be informed of the condition of success; and it is most encouraging and invigorating to be assured that success is certain to the faithful. To say that *faith overcometh*, is only saying in other words, that Christianity is essentially successful—Christianity on the large scale of the Church, and Christianity in our hearts. We can never be defeated as Christians. Defeat involves the resignation of our Christian character.

The enemy is here called *the world*. The world is the scene of our life and activity; but not thus is it an enemy. It is not in itself evil, but is rendered so by our frailty and proneness to sin. To irregular desire, excessive fear, and distrust of God, it furnishes continual occasions of temptation. Were we alone on the earth, it would present opportunities of sin, and incentives to sin, which again would be seconded by the evil which is within us. How much more powerful are these temptations, when—to the original allurements—are added innumerable fellow-men, who furnish examples of transgressors, and are ready to be our companions in sin, or, perhaps, to molest us if we decline joining them! This, then, is *the world* which we are to overcome; the sphere of our ordinary life, which is ever liable to abuse from ourselves, and our ordinary companionship with frail and sinful creatures

like ourselves. This is *the world* which is constantly used by Satan as an instrument of temptation. If we yield to the temptation, we are overcome by the Devil; if we successfully resist, we overcome him; for he has no other power over us than this gives him.

In the second chapter of this epistle, the apostle particularizes *the lust of the flesh*, or the sphere of sensuality; *the lust of the eyes*, or the sphere of covetousness; and *the pride of life*, or the sphere of ostentation, as the things which are *in the world*. It is remarkable that in all these respects, *the tree of knowledge of good and evil* furnished an occasion of temptation. *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.* This tree was, then, her *world* in the sense of the text—the only means of temptation by which she was assailable. Alas, how greatly has *the world* been enlarged for us by that first transgression! Evil suggestions arise from objects of nature, and are more powerful in the company of our fellows. We feel the force of evil example and the allurements of association. The sphere of the Tempter was limited indeed at first; but by his one sad success there, the door was opened for all the world of nature, and all human fellowship, to be perverted into instruments of death. We are exposed to incessant danger, and may be said, spiritually, to *stand in jeopardy every hour*.

Turn we to the principle of safety and victory. *This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith.* Not by lamenting our present weakness, nor by brooding over our past defeats, nor by recurring to ourselves in any way, is the world to be overcome; but by *faith*. If you know what a man's belief is—if you know the main object of his reliance—you have the key to the man. As his faith, so his character, his life, and his success in the grand conflict. Now faith must have an *object*; we believe in something, we put our trust in some person. It is the power of the Divine Truth which comes to us from above, the might of the Divine Person in whom we trust, which overcomes the world. Faith overcomes

by bringing Divine strength into the field. The apostle tells us in the next sentence what is the object of the Christian belief. *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

To believe *that Jesus is the Son of God*, and to yield ourselves to the practical power of this truth, that is, to trust in Him as such, is all that we need for overcoming the world. For if our Jesus is indeed the Son of God, then all that He has done assumes an exemplary character, and obtains a public virtue.

Although the whole life of Christ was a period of conflict with the world and the Devil, there were two grand moments when this conflict was at the hottest; the one at the beginning, the other at the end of His ministry.

At the beginning of Christ's ministry, Satan assailed Him with three temptations, corresponding to the three spheres of desire—the flesh, covetousness, and vain-glory. These three temptations Christ overcame, and all in the same way, by simple reliance on God His Father, and faithfulness to His word. This victory was achieved for us; that we might draw strength from the belief of it; that we might learn how the world is to be resisted; that we might receive help by *looking away from* (ἀπορῶντες) the world unto Jesus our Champion, *the Author and the Chief Leader* (ἀρχηγόν) in the path of faith.

At the end of Christ's ministry, He was again assailed by Satan; but this time not by means of desire, but of fear. The question now was, whether Jesus would be faithful to His Father, when obedience would inevitably lead to death, and that the death of the cross—where the body would be tortured, and where, amid insult and disgrace, He must, though in the prime maturity of manhood, bid farewell to the world. This, also, our mighty Champion could accomplish. *For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Thus He showed us that ease and life must be sacrificed to duty, and that the true path to honor is the

way of lowly obedience. This victory was achieved for us that we might draw strength from the belief of it ; that we might learn how the world is to be overcome ; that we might receive help from Him who is *exalted as a Prince and a Saviour*. Let us then *consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds*. (Heb. xii. 3).

To believe that *Jesus is the Son of God*, is to believe that God is our Father in Him. He was declared by resurrection to be the Son of God ; and His first language after He was risen was an acknowledgment of His brethren. If we believe that God is our Father, and yield ourselves to the practical power of this most wholesome and consoling truth, we shall not be overcome by irregular desire, but keep ourselves pure ; we shall not be overwhelmed by the cares of this life, but trustfully throw ourselves on His Fatherhood ; we shall not be overpowered by fear, but feel that withal the wreck of nature, we have a quiet and lasting home ; in short, we shall not be overcome by the world, but we shall overcome the world, as Christ did, and by His help, even by *the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings*.

When the mind is endued with this faith, so great is the change, that it is no less than a regeneration ; so ennobling is it, that it is a witness of our sonship ; for the Apostle says, *Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*.

Observe, that this faith is not belief in any mere theory or speculative doctrine, in any abstract truth, nor in anything whatsoever which has been ascertained by the native energy of the human mind. It is faith in a revealed Saviour, a redeeming God ; faith that God has given us His Only-begotten Son, to be our brother ; faith in all the facts of His history—His conflict, His victory for us, His overcoming resurrection, and everlasting glory ; trust in His power, His merits, and His mercy.

It was simply by the might of this faith, that the first Christians *overcame the world*, and that the Church was



established on the ruins of Judaism and Paganism, in face of the pomp and power of the Empire, and in spite of persecution. And by the same might, blessed be God! the Church continues to this hour.

Brethren, let this faith be ours. Let us firmly believe, ever keep in view, and yield ourselves to the power of the truth that *Jesus is the Son of God*. In Him let us trust, as our Champion and Redeemer, the Revealer and Messenger of the Father's will, and our Guide to eternal life. And inasmuch as this faith is exposed to assaults from without and from within, and is ever liable to weakening and decay, let us put up fervent and unceasing prayer for the renewal and increase of it, hoping for the fulfilment of the promise : *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.* (Rev. iii. 21).

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### THE VANITY OF MAN.

"Verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity."—Psalm xxxix. 5.

First: It is suggested—that *there is a difference in the secular states of men in this life*. The writer speaks of the "best state." Men, here, possess in very different degrees, health, means of subsistence, sources of comfort, elements of enjoyment, power and influence. Between the man who is in the "best state," and the man who is in the

worst state, there is an immense disparity. Secondly: It is suggested—that *the man who occupies the "best" secular state in this life is vanity*—Is "altogether vanity." Men differ widely as to the secular *summum bonum*—the "best state:" but let it be what you like, it is asserted that man's life in it is vanity. Picture a man in the prime of manhood, majestic in physical stature, and robust in health, possessing mental powers of the highest type, thoroughly disciplined, and

under the direction of a judgment richly stored with knowledge, his home a paradise of love, his position in the world one of almost unbounded affluence and power, the idol of an illustrious circle, or, if you will, the master of a mighty empire : now a man in such a condition, such a "state," I understand the writer of the text to say, is vanity. This is certainly a startling statement, and requires a thorough searching in order to see how much truth there is in it. We must of course ascertain in what sense the word "vanity" is here employed. In looking at its use in the Bible, we find it employed in two different senses. In the one sense it stands for *hollowness*, in the other for *worthlessness*. In the former it represents a thing without any substance, a *fleeting shadow*, an intangible phantom ; in the latter, a thing that is of no service, answers no purpose of usefulness.

Now, our position is, that in both these senses man's life in its best estate, viewed apart from a *righteous immortality*, is "altogether vanity."

I. Man's existence WITHOUT IMMORTALITY IS VANITY. First: *It is vain in the sense of hollowness*. It is an empty fiction, an inflated bubble. (1) It lacks inner satisfaction.

Amidst all the rich provisions of his "best state," he finds nothing that can satisfy his soul. The hunger of his spiritual nature is voracious, and sometimes agonizing. This, of itself, makes him to a great extent the victim of cares and anxieties, annoyances, &c. He *appears* happy in his best estate, but he is not. He is a sham. His appearance is a huge falsehood. In the midst of his worldly affluence he feels an inner pauperism. Groans often rise from the depths of his moral being, that drown the sweetest music that floats in his mansion. Not so with other sentient existences around him ; they appear what they are. Their sportive movements, their gambols on the meadows, and their warbles in the grove, mean the happiness they feel. (2) It lacks endurance. This empty thing, this shadow, is so short-lived. There is no endurance even in this fiction. His best estate itself is a floating cloud, ever changing, and gradually melting into nothingness. A mistake in his title-deeds, a crisis in the market, an accident—play with fortunes as winds with the floating mists. As to fame, one shrug of the shoulder, one inuendo, may ruin it ; and as to his existence, his days are a shadow that passeth away. There

is nothing enduring. Nature around him, though herself a dying creature, seems to laugh at the transitions of him who calls himself her lord. Thousands of years pass away, hundreds of generations come and go, and the sun shines on with equal lustre; the mountains look as strong as ever; and ocean heaves and swells with the buoyancy of youthhood. The river, as it rolls at the feet of men, makes mirthful music of their vanity:—

“Men may come, and men may go,  
But I roll on for ever.”

Thus we are vanity in the sense of *hollowness*, fiction, &c. Secondly: *It is vain in the sense of worthlessness.* On the assumption that there is no immortality, what useful purpose is answered by our existence? Surely, cultivating a farm for a few years, or building a few houses, amassing a little wealth, making a few discoveries, gaining a little knowledge, composing a few books, are results contemptible compared with the potentialities of our existence? What philosopher can look at man's constitution, and study his wonderful powers, and say that the best things he does here are worthy of his aspirations and endowments? Tell me that to bear a feather is worth the construction of an *engine* powerful enough to

bear the wealth of an empire, and then tell me that the best thing man has done here, is worthy of his wonderful organization. I appreciate the literary productions of genius, but the best of them I feel are unworthy of our creation. If man can do nothing higher than compose epics like Milton, construct dramas like Shakespeare, produce essays like Bacon, write history like Macaulay, or deliver orations like Demosthenes; and these are some of the highest things he has yet done on this earth—Then I say that his works are paltry and futile in the extreme, as compared with the powers which he possesses, and the lofty ideals that are constantly rising before the eye of his consciousness, and challenging divinest efforts.

II. Man's existence WITH A GODLESS IMMORTALITY IS VANITY. If there is no life beyond this, if the grave is the end of existence, if after the labor of a few years here we must cease to be for ever, all must feel the truth of the text, that man's existence here is “altogether vanity.” It is hollow and worthless in the extreme. But we advance farther than this, and say, that even on the assumption that he shall live for ever if he continues *godless*, his existence is still a “vanity.” A

godless immortality is infinite vanity. First : *It is an existence eternally pursuing a phantom.* A desire for greatness, for relief, for happiness, is an irradicable instinct in the human soul ; hence, through the ages, the godless will be urged on to pursue those things, but never reach them ; always phantoms in the distance, every effort to grasp them throwing the soul back upon herself in the agony of disappointment. Secondly : *It is an existence eternally producing injury.* All the efforts of the godless will be not only unworthy of their nature, not only thoroughly worthless, but terribly *injurious* to self and the creation. From this subject we learn—(1) The infinite worth of the Gospel. It does two things : It reveals the immortality of man, and supplies the means by which that immortality may be a godly one ; and, therefore, takes away the vanity of human life. If man is to live for ever, and if that for ever is to be holy, man's existence, instead of being vain, is most real, valuable, and dignified. (2) The infinite folly of the Gospel-rejector. The man who rejects the Gospel, invests his being with a wretched vanity for ever.

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## THE LIGHTED PATH.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Psalm cxix. 105.

Two thoughts are suggested by these words.

I. THAT MAN'S DESTINY WITHOUT THE GOSPEL IS A PROGRESS IN THE DARK. The "lamp" implies night ; night in which neither moon or stars can give sufficient light for the journey. First : *Darkness rests on man's path of duty.* The ages have been rife with conflicting theories of duty. The world by wisdom knew not God, whose existence is the foundation and whose will is the standard of duty. Men, without the Gospel, grope as in the dark on all moral questions. Secondly : *Darkness rests on man's path of happiness.* The removal of an universally-felt guilt, and the expulsion from the soul of passions and propensities that agitate the heart, disorganize the powers, pervert the will and pollute the character, are essential to happiness. But how are they to be secured ? Without the Gospel a dark night rests on these questions.

II. MAN'S DESTINY WITH THE GOSPEL IS A PROGRESS IN THE LIGHT. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet," &c. First : *The light is ever in the*

*advance.* We carry the lamp before us to shed a light upon the path in which we are directing our steps.

The Bible is always in advance of man's intelligence. The world's intelligence has outgrown many other systems, and they lie obsolete in the relics of the past, but the Bible keeps in advance of all human discoveries. Secondly: *The light is always clear.* It shows distinctly whereabouts you are; all the objects in the path, however minute, stand out with distinctness. It shows the objects in their true character. It does not throw a lurid glare which gives a false coloring to the scene on which it falls. Clear is the light which the Gospel sheds on all the subjects of duty and destiny. Thirdly: *The light is thoroughly sufficient.* It lights up the whole region through which we have to pass, throws its beams along the whole path. It lights you into the nightless world. Fourthly: *The light is ever enduring.* It is not an *ignis fatuus*, or offspring of mist and vapor, that glitters for a moment only to mislead. Nor a meteor that flashes athwart the firmament and is gone, leaving a deeper darkness in the night. It is a quenchless lamp; its oil is inexhaustible, no waters can quench it,

no storms can blow it out. From Celsus down to this hour, infidelity has sought to quench it, but it burns brighter to-day than ever. The Bible radiates with more or less brightness in all the literature of the world, and in every home of Christendom. It gleams in the mansion of the prince, and often burns with a lustre in the beggar's lowly cot.

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#### PIETY AT HOME.

"Shew piety at home."—  
1 Tim. v. 4.

By "piety at home" we do not mean rigorous rules of religious discipline, a monotonous gravity of manner, a punctilious observance of the forms of morning and evening worship. There is often great impiety connected with all of these, and lovely piety where these are not. Rigorous religious discipline have often gendered in young hearts a hatred for religion, and the prosy prayers of morning and evening have sown the seeds of infidelity in many an opening soul. Do we disparage order or devotion? In no wise. But the order we advocate is the order of love, not of law. The devotion we prize is the devotion of every hour's life to the true, the loving, and the godlike, rather

than the devotion of formal prayers. Let thy liturgies be read out in thy life, and the hearts of thy children will chant the responses. "Piety at home" is supreme love to God, purifying, ennobling, directing all social affections, turning all faces into smiles, and setting all voices to music.

This "piety at home" may be looked upon in three aspects.

I. AS THE BEST TEST OF PIETY ABROAD. We have but little faith in that piety which prays, and talks, and preaches abroad, but which has no felt charm and power at home. The father who has not made his own household pious, has obviously something to do before he is justified in busying himself about piety abroad. His work is rather on the hearth than in the pulpit. "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?"

We look at "piety at home"—

II. AS THE BEST GUARANTEE OF PIETY ABROAD. First: Home piety is a *natural* thing. By the every-day thoughts and habits of home, it has become not only part the nature, but the very soul of the man; hence abroad he cannot shake it off if he would. Abroad he

does not obtrude it, it is himself; he does not specially discuss it, it is the meaning of his looks, the breath of his words. The piety abroad which looks with a distorted countenance, makes long faces, speaks in unnatural and sepulchral tones, has, I am bold to aver, no residence at home. Secondly: Home piety is a *powerful* thing. It *must* show itself abroad. To hide it would be to war against the strongest impulses and habits of nature. Some of the contemporaries of the apostles took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Those who live with Jesus at home, will carry in their mind, their mien, and manners abroad, an unearthly something that will make them recognized as His companions abroad.

We look at "piety at home"—

III. AS THE BEST PROMOTER OF PIETY ABROAD. First: Home is more *common* than temples. Churches and chapels lie wide apart, amidst vast populations; but homes are everywhere. Only a few are members of a congregation; all are members of an household. Every child of man is tied to some domestic circle—some home. Piety at home, then, has its organ everywhere. Secondly: Home is more

*influential* than temples. The words of a preacher to his congregation are powerless, compared with the words of parents to their children, of brothers to their sisters, and sisters to their brothers. The words of loving relations to their own members are electric with love. Besides, the influence of the preacher is only *occasional*—a few times in the week at least. The influence of home is constant—constant as the air we breathe. Thirdly: Home is more *permanent* than temples. No institution so durable on earth as that of the domestic. Nations die, sects expire, ecclesiastical systems pass away, temples fall to ruin, but home stands as a rock amidst the swelling sea of change. Home, like an indestructible ark, comes floating down the floods of century and of change.

Thank God for pious homes.

"My boast is not that I can trace  
my birth  
From loins enthroned, or rulers  
of the earth,  
But higher, far, my proud pretensions rise—  
The son of parents passed into  
the skies."—COWPER.

#### ROTTENNESS AND RUIN.

"For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."—Matt. xxiv. 28.

[An exposition of this chapter will be found elsewhere in the

"Homilist." See vol. iv., New Series, p. 122.]

IN this verse Christ states a universal law, that *wherever there is rottenness in character, there will be ruin in destiny*. The principle is, that "he who soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," &c.

#### I. THE ROTTEN CHARACTER.

There is a moral character which may be regarded as a *carcase*. It has no moral life in it. The *form* of life is there, and that is all. It is without breath, warmth, activity. The character uninspired and uncontrolled by supreme love to God, whatever may be its peculiar form, is rottenness. First: *In the sensual form it is rotten*. There are men whose characters are formed entirely on the principles of animalism. They are pre-eminently *fleshly*. Their character is a *carcase*. Secondly: *In the secular form it is rotten*. There are men whose characters are formed by gain in some way or other: gain of wealth, power, fame. The character is rotten; it is a mere *carcase*. Thirdly: *In the religious form it is rotten*. There are men who have a kind of religious character but have no supreme love to God. Sometimes their character is marked by *creedism*, sometimes by *emotionalism*, some-

times by *ritualism*. But, whatever its peculiar feature, it is rotten, it is a *carcase*.

## II. A RUINED DESTINY.

"Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." This is a law. Men whose characters are not formed by a Divine love must become the victims of the eagles of retribution. *Moral causation, memory, observation, consciousness, and the Bible*, all demonstrate this.

The eagles from afar, upon the rocky height, or from the distant fields of air, scent the prey beneath, and with their ravenous instincts pounce down to devour. Terrible truth this. Wherever there is a moral *carcase* there will come an eagle to devour.

God's universe is full of moral eagles. They are ever on the wing in search of what is rotten, to clear it from creation. "*The wages of sin is death,*" &c. "*He that breaketh through a hedge, the serpent shall sting him,*" &c.

## A TIMELY PERIOD.

"And I gave her space to repent."—Rev. ii. 21.

God is the great giver; He gives life and food and happiness to all His creatures. He gave to man an erect body, and a noble soul. Strange that man should want

the gift spoken of in the text; stranger still that God should so wonderfully bestow it. We have in the words—

## I. A DEFINITION OF TIME.

Some call time the measure of duration; others the succession of ideas, pearls strung upon a golden thread. But is not this as good as either: "space to repent?" Man is here, not to found a family, not to make a fortune, not to live a long life, but "to repent."

## II. A LIMITATION OF MERCY.

"Space," a definite period of time. Man's "days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass," Job xiv. 5. "He limiteth a certain day," the opportunities to receive gracious visitations are compressed within the lifetime of a day! "The Holy Ghost saith, to-day." Exhort while it is called to-day. (Heb. iii, 7—13.) First: *How rash the calculations of the sinner.* "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." Secondly: *How simple the reckoning of the saint.* "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." (Gen. xlvii. 9.) "All the days of my appointed time," &c. (Job xiv. 14.) "Brethren, the time is short." (1 Cor. vii. 29.)



III. A DECLARATION OF DUTY. "Repent." It must be "Repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." "Repentance is the earthly side of faith, faith the heavenly side of repentance;" or "Repentance is the tear in the eye of faith." We ask not for the garments and manners of repentance; these the hypocrites can furnish; we want *the thing*: change of will, of purpose, of object. Oh, sinner, have you not had opportunities, encouragement, instruction, warning? The dark gulf that rolls onward to hell is not without beacon or buoy, or lightship; the coastline, the quick-sand, the rocks, the maelström, are flooded with Gospel light; and he who in our day will push on and despise the riches of the goodness and forbearance and longsuffering of God, will realize in fact the closing words of Bunyan's immortal pilgrim, "Then I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven."

IV. A FORESHADOWING OF DESTINY. "I gave her space

to repent, and she repented not. Behold," &c. How is it that man can foresee his destiny? Because he can pursue a syllogism to its conclusion. In eternity there are two places of abode; a palace and a prison. The path leading to these is on earth, the fitness for these is accomplished in time. The birth-chastening, meetening, adorning for heaven, is done here; and evil deeds and wilful darkness done and loved on earth, will most certainly fit a man for hell. Man is related to eternity. His memory is related to the book of God's remembrance; his conscience to the verdict which shall come from the great white throne! They will ever tally and agree. The time for the sinner to stop, to think, to turn, is now, for the stream of time runs to the ocean of eternity; this limited period shall melt into the illimitable, this finite into the infinite. Then, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." (Rev. xxii. 11.)

H. T. M.

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## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

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*Extracts from the works of RICHTER.*

Ephemera die all at sunset, and no insect of this class has ever

sported in the beams of the morning sun. Happier are ye, little human ephemera! Ye played only

in the ascending beams, and in the early dawn, and in the eastern light. Hovered for a little space over a world of freshness and of blossoms, and fell asleep in innocence before yet the morning dew was exhaled.

A woman who could always love, would never grow old; and the love of mother and wife would often give or preserve many charms, if it were not too often combined with parental and conjugal anger. There remains in the faces of women who are naturally serene and peaceful, and of those rendered so by religion, an after-spring; and later, an after-summer, the reflex of their most beautiful bloom.

Honour, honesty, firm will, truthfulness, advancing in spite of threatening wounds, endurance of misfortune, (or the blows of fate) frankness, self-respect, self-equipoise, contempt of opinion, justice, and perseverance. All these, and similar words, denote only one-half of the moral nature, moral strength, and elevation. The second half includes all that refers to the lives of the kingdom of love, gentleness, beneficence. These may be called moral beauty.

#### FORGIVENESS OF SPIRIT.

Nothing is more moving to man than the spectacle of reconciliation. Our weaknesses are thus idemnified, and are not too costly, being the price we pay for the hour of forgiveness; and the archangel who has never felt anger, has reason to envy the man who subdues it. When thou forgivest, the man who has pierced thy heart stands to thee in the relation of the sea-worm that perforates the shell of the mussel, which straightway closes the worm with a pearl.

#### FORGIVENESS, A NECESSARY VIRTUE.

Man has an unfortunate readiness in the evil hour, after receiv-

ing an affront, to draw together all the moon-spots on the other person into an outline of shadow and a night-piece, and to transform a single deed into a whole life; and this only in order that he may thoroughly relish the pleasure of being angry. In love, he has, fortunately, the opposite faculty of crowding together all the light parts and rays of its object into one focus, by means of the burning glass of imagination, and letting its sun burn without its spots; but he, too, generally does this only when the beloved, and often censured being, is already beyond the skies. In order, however, that we should do this sooner and oftener, we ought to act like Wincklemann, but only in another way. As he usually set aside a particular half-hour on each day for the purpose of beholding and meditating on his too happy existence in Rome, so we ought daily or weekly to dedicate and sanctify a solitary hour for the purpose of summing up the virtues of our families, our wives, our children, and our friends, and viewing them in this beautiful crowded assemblage of their good qualities. And, indeed, we should do so for this reason, that we may not forgive and love too late, when the beloved beings are already departed hence, and are beyond our reach.

#### INGRATITUDE.

We do not marvel at the sunrise of a joy, only at its sunset. Then, on the other hand, we are amazed at the commencement of a sorrow-storm, but that it should go off in gentle showers we think quite natural.

#### DEMAND OF LOVE.

Love requires not so much proofs as expressions of love. Love demands little else than the power to feel, and to requite love.

## SEARCH AFTER TRUTH.

According to Democritus, truth lies at the bottom of a well, the depth of which, alas! gives but little hope of release. To be sure, one advantage is derived from this,

that the water serves for a mirror in which truth may be reflected. I have heard, however, that some philosophers, in seeking for truth, to pay homage to her, have seen their own image, and adored it instead.

## Theological Notes and Queries.

## OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

*Queries to be answered.*

14.—In 1 John v. 16, there are two deaths mentioned, "A sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." What sin is meant by the first? and does the second refer to the sin against the Holy Ghost? In verse 18 it is said, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is born of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Does not that rest on the doctrine—once in grace always in grace? Is there not a possibility of falling? What did St. Paul mean when he said, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—W. H. S.

15.—If this world, renovated and reconstituted, is to be the future abode of the blessed, in what sense did Christ "go to prepare a place" for His people?

CAMERON.

16.—By the probation of angels, I mean the same as the probation of man in its commonly received meaning. I have no source of information on the subject; it is the very thing I want. The passage in Jude to which you refer, Bushnell says does not refer to angels,

but to man. But that is not exactly my question. If there was any means of ascertaining if all angels have passed their trial—of course supposing them to have been, like man, placed on trial. I have often seen it stated as an acknowledged fact that they have, but have never seen a proof given.—W. G. PASCOE.

17.—The surviving friends of deceased persons very rarely appear to suffer from any fears or doubts respecting the favorable acceptance and reception into heaven of the departed. In our daily experience, it is very seldom indeed that we hear the expression of any anxiety or uneasiness upon the point. Whence this apparent indifference or composure?—*MEMENTO MORI*.

18.—As supernatural power is not a converting or regenerative agency, and as miracles would appear to be only adapted to affect minds of a low or wrong intellectual status, may I ask from what point of view the miracles of Christ are of value or importance to the men of the present day? The hand which causes our wonderful planet, with its many millions of inhabitants, to revolve round the sun, can, assuredly, without effort, give sight to the blind, health to the sick, speech to the dumb, life to the dead, and feed thousands with a few loaves and fishes.—*CELITUS MIHI VIRES*.

## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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**THE BOOK OF JOB.** By the late **HERMANN HEDWIG BERNARD, Ph.D., M.A.** Edited, with a Translation and additional Notes, by **FRANK CHANCE, B.A., M.B.** Vol. I., (containing the whole of the original work). London : Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

THE erudite and profound author of this book was, for seven and twenty years, Hebrew teacher in the University of Cambridge ; a fact, which, in itself, is a guarantee of competency to deal with this, the oldest and greatest poem of the world. The following are some of the advantages which Dr. Bernard's exposition of this book possesses over all others with which we are acquainted. (1) The bards of this old poem, or if you will, the actors of this old drama, are so treated throughout that their characters are found to remain intact from the outset to the end. (2) The speech of Elibu, which most other expositors have treated as empty bombastic, the grandiloquent utterance of a shallow, conceited, and presumptuous youth, is here made to appear the most sage-like and eloquent part of the book. (3) The exposition is conducted by the help of the Hebrew contained in the Bible itself, and not, as is generally the case, by constant recourse to cognate languages. (4.) Scarcely a verse or even a word is employed in the interpretation disagreeing with the established version, the reason and the rectitude of which the author does not endeavour to justify. Into the questions as to what class the book may be considered to belong, whether the speakers were fictitious or real characters ; if they existed, where they lived, and who was really the author of the work, Dr. Bernard does not enter. His ruling purpose has been to ascertain the train of reasoning pursued throughout. As the production of one of the first Hebraists of our age, a shrewd and profound thinker, a ripe scholar, greatly possessed with the spirit of the thought and religion of the ancients, this work will be hailed by every genuine Biblical student.

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**THE BAMPTON LECTURES.** By **J. HANNAH, D.C.L.** London : John Murray. THIS work contains eight lectures, the subjects of which are :—Inspiration and Revelation, their respective definitions and range : The reality

of the Revelation as established by a contrast with heathen religions : The reality in the Inspiration as illustrated by the Atinomes of Scripture : Its reality as illustrated by the duplex sensus : The Human Element : History and Science : Moral Difficulties . Superiority of Scripture to its writers : and—General Conclusion. The mere statements of the subjects will indicate to our readers that the volume touches the vitalities of the great book of Scripture. The reverent and learned author discusses these momentous subjects with great ability, and in a spirit scientific and devout. The work is worthy of a place by the side of the most-famed volumes in the Bampton Series.

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FRUITS FROM CANAAN'S BOUGHS. By JOHN RUDALL, Barrister-at-Law.  
London : James Nisbet & Co.

THE author of this book considers that in no age of the Church was Divine truth more powerfully exhibited than during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and with the great religious writers of those ages he has held fellowship for many years, made extracts from their ponderous folios and worm-eaten volumes. The result is this work. Belonging as the author evidently does to what has been called the "savoury school" of orthodox Christians, his selections agree with his own spirit and views. He has not perhaps sought the most racy, far-reaching and brilliant utterances of the old writers, but those sweet and comforting things that the Christians of his own type will relish and prize.

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THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ENGLAND. By SAMUEL ROWLES PATTISON. London : Jackson, Walford & Hodder.

THIS work comprises a rich store of historic information of a very valuable kind. The author looks at the history of England through the conviction, that its progress in every thing that is good in man is to be ascribed to Christianity. "The first Christianity of this country," says the author, "was communicated by an impulse of that wave which beginning its flow at Jerusalem, on the death of the proto-martyr Stephen, passed over Asia Minor, by Macedonia, into Greece ; thence to Italy, Africa, Spain and Gaul ; everywhere fertilizing as it flowed. It came to us colored with some few corruptions which had been thrown into its pure waters in their westward course, but still free from the baneful mixtures which Rome afterwards added to the noble current. The earliest historical relations of British Christianity, rejecting the hypotheses which would assign its origin to Apostolic preaching—or to the influence of Claudia, celebrated by the verse of Martial, and possibly the same as is referred to in the epistle to Timothy—or to Brau, the father of the patriotic British king Caractacus, appear to have been with ecclesiastical Gaul, of which Lyons and Vienne were the chief cities.

From this circumstance our historians have deduced the pedigree of British Christian doctrine and discipline from Antioch rather than from Rome, and this conclusion is supported by Neander and by Lappenburg as well as by our own writers." We could write much on this work, for though small in bulk, it is fraught with suggestions. It traces the very life's blood of English history, as it runs through the veins of ages.

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**MEMORABLE EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF A LONDON PHYSICIAN.** In Three Parts. London: Virtue Brothers.

"The members of the profession," says the author of this book, "of the present day are all at sixes and sevens. Whether in opinion or in practice, there is nothing but doubt and disagreement prevailing in their ranks. Allopathy, Homœopathy, Hydropathy, Chrono-thermalism! Thirty years ago you never heard these words. Physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries thirty years ago, all squared their measures by a common creed. In theory, as in practice, one and all held a community of tenet, seemingly as unchanging and unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. According to the whole profession then, and—if the truth be told—according to many of them still, the root of every disease is 'inflammation.' " This short extract suggests to the reader what to expect in the pages of this work. The writer's strictures upon orthodox physicians and practitioners are such as to shake the confidence of the public both in their science and in their skill. It would be well if the indolent, and the morbid, those who are looking at their tongues and feeling their pulses because they have nothing else to do, and who are, therefore, constantly calling in the doctors to their house, would read this work. It would scatter their delusions, keep them away from medicine, make them healthier people, and save their pockets. The book is full of valuable information, and thoroughly interesting.

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**DIVINE COMPASSION.** By JAMES CULROSS, A.M. London: Nisbet & Co.

The object of this work is to show the mercy of God to man, by Christ's treatment of the sinners who appealed to Him. The woman of Samaria, the man born blind, little children, the rich young man, Peter, and the dying thief, are some of the examples he selects. The idea of the book is a happy one, and is impressively wrought out.

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**THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.** Newly Translated, Explained, Illustrated, and Applied. By REV. A. B. GEOSART, First U. P. Church, Kinross. London: Nisbet & Co.

MR. GEOSART is a quaint and curious author, one who well exemplifies the maxim, "Reading maketh a full man." Nothing in prose or verse

of any school of divinity, seems to have escaped him. We cannot enter into the points which invite remark in the mysterious conflict between the Prince of Light and the Prince of Darkness, between our Living Friend and our Living Foe. We have already discussed the subject, and our author refers in his volume with commendation to what we have advanced. In addition to the original matter—which contains a new translation, with Critical Remarks—the author presents us with many choice passages from writers unknown and well-known; among whom are—Hacket, Gumbleden, Leighton, Beaumont, Andrewes, Udall, Manton, Taylor, Trapp, Manning, Arnold, Kingsley, Wilberforce. Nowhere in so small a compass have we met with so valuable and copious a collection of extracts, all of which bear on the elucidation of the subject. Among the topics which will not command universal acceptance, is where Mr. G. gravely recommends ministers to discard Jay, Simeon, and to read Shakespeare by way of preparation for the pulpit. His estimate of recent editions of the Greek Testament is amusingly graphic. The one by Webster and Wilkinson is the only one which pleases him, as having no pretentiousness, no dogmatism, and superior to any for ripe scholarship, spiritual insight, suggestiveness, truthfulness; a judgment this, on which we have more than once pronounced. Dean Alford is described as perpetually disappointing and inexact, betraying great want of deliberation and thoroughness of scholarship. Dr. Wordsworth is said to be full of patriotic lore and nonsense, dexterous in evading difficulties, raising enormous buttresses of quotations to keep up rotten beams. Our readers would do well to procure this remarkable work.

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**CRISIS OF BEING; Six Lectures to Young Men on Religious Decision.**

By the REV. DAVID THOMAS, D.D., Stockwell. Also, the **PROGRESS OF BEING**, by the same author. A New Edition. London: Jackson, Walford & Hodder.

BEING so closely connected with the author of these volumes, we have not the heart to condemn them, nor the immodesty to praise them. Suffice it to say that many thousands of each have been sold. Young men in every part of the world have acknowledged the good they have derived from them; and they now appear in a new form, and at a reduced price (eighteenpence).

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**GOOD STORIES. No. I.—THE PEACEMAKER: A Christmas Story. No. II.—**

**FOUR LADS AND THEIR LIVES: A Night-School Story. Selected and Edited by J. ERSKINE CLARK, M.A. London: W. Macintosh.**

THESE are the first two numbers of a new serial. The stories are selected with taste and judgment; the illustrations are striking; the "getting up" unique and beautiful. The name of the Editor is a guarantee for sterling thought, catholic spirit, and literary excellence.



# A HOMILY

ON

## The World's Cry

### Concerning the Method of being brought into Fellowship with God.

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"Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God?"—Micah vi. 6.

**I**N our last Homily, our attention was directed to "Man's Felt Distance from his Maker." We sought for an explanation of this feeling in three sources:—human philosophy, speculative theology, and Divine revelation. We found it in the last, and nowhere else. Here we learned that man's iniquities have produced the distressing separation between him and his Maker. It is not that God has withdrawn from us, but that we are alienated from Him by wicked works. The feeling of the distance is misery—is hell; and the vital question now to consider is, How can it be removed? How can the twain, the soul and its God, be one again? "Wherewith shall we come before the Lord?" This is another of the world's cries. A cry—deep, loud, continuous. Where can we get a satisfactory response? There are three, and only three, answers: that which has reference to the presentation of sacrifices, that which has reference to a right moral conduct, that which has reference to the intervention of Christ. Let us look a little into each of these three, and see which, if either, furnishes the solution.

First: *There is that which has reference to presentation of sacrifices.* "Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, calves?" &c. This is the way in which heathens have sought to bridge the gulf between themselves and their Maker. Yes, and



the old Hebrew too. Millions of victims have been slain, and oceans of blood have been shed. But is this satisfactory? To say that we are to return to God through sacrifices, however costly and abundant, is not quite sufficient. In the first place it is repugnant to our reason to suppose that such sacrifices can be acceptable to the God of love and mercy. The dictates of our moral nature render it impossible for us to feel that the blood of innocent victims can be acceptable to our Maker. In the second place, it is opposed to the declarations of the Bible. "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering." (Ps. li. 16.) "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord:" (Isa. i. 11.) "And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering." (Isa. xl. 16.) "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." (Ps. xlix. 7, 8.) And in the third place, such sacrifices, as a fact, have never removed from man this feeling of distance from his Maker. The gulf remains as deep and broad though the cattle upon a thousand hills were offered.

Secondly: *There is that which has reference to a right moral conduct.* "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" This is just what philosophy would say. Think the true, love the good, and do the right, and you will be accepted of your Maker—you will come back into a friendly state with Him. This is satisfactory so far as it goes; for to do the right thing, is reconciliation with Heaven. Those who live a holy life walk with God, and are happy in His fellowship. But the question is, How to come into this morally right state? And the philosophy which presents this method, has no answer to this question.

Thirdly: *There is that which has reference to the intervention of Christ.* This is the answer of the Bible. It teaches that Christ is man's way back to fellowship with his Maker. "I am the

way: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. ii. 18.) He is the "mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." (Col. i. 21.) "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Such passages may be multiplied almost indefinitely. This is the answer of the Bible to the question.

But, now, in order to see the satisfactoriness of this answer, it may be necessary to ask the question, In what way does Christ bring man into fellowship with God? For the sake of clearness we may answer: Negatively;—First: Not by repealing any of the laws of moral obligation binding on man. Christ's intervention did not render man in the slightest degree less bound to obey every precept in Heaven's moral code. That code is as immutable as God Himself. Secondly: Not by dispensing with any of the settled conditions of spiritual culture and improvement. Christ does not make men good in any miraculous way. Observation, reflection, study, resolution, faith, practice, these are the means by which souls must ever advance. Thirdly: Not by effecting any change in the Divine mind. Christ's intention did not alter God's feelings towards man. That He quenched the wrath of God by His sufferings, is the blasphemous dream of a barbarous theology. The mission of Christ was the effect—not the cause—of God's love. Christ was its messenger and minister, not its creator. Nor did He change God's purpose. It was according to His eternal purpose that Christ came, and to work that purpose out was Christ's mission.

What, then, does He do? *He is the Reconciler.* He reconciles not God to man, but man to God. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." When a reconciliation takes place between men at enmity, who were once friends, there is generally a mutual change to some extent; each concedes a something, until the minds meet in love, and

reach the old point of friendship. Not so with the reconciliation between man and God. The Infinite has nothing to concede. He can never change. All the concession and the change must be on man's part. It is worthy of remark, that the Greek word *καταλλαγή*, which is translated "reconciliation" in our version, never means an alteration in the two divided parties, but in one only. This is the word which the New Testament writers employ to represent the work of Christ in bringing man back into fellowship with God.

In Christ, as the reconciler or as the remover of this felt distance between man and his Maker, we discover a twofold adaptation of the most perfect kind.

I. IN HIM WE SEE A SPECIAL APPROACH OF GOD TO MAN. Though there is no change in the Divine nature or character, yet in Christ there is a change in the Divine manifestation. Instead of continuing to manifest Himself to the human soul in the forms and operations of universal nature, He in Christ comes to man in man's own nature. "God is manifest in the flesh." In man He reveals the image of His invisible self, He radiates the brightness of His own glory. In this manifestation, two great obstructions to man's union to God are removed.

First: The obstruction of *inappreciability*. God, abroad in nature, rolling the systems of immensity, beating in all forces and pulsating in all life, is so vast as to be inappreciable by man, but in the man Christ He comes within our horizon and within the compass of our faculties. He is a person; more, a *human* person; He stands before us in our nature, He looks at us with human eyes, He speaks to us in human words, He thinks our thoughts, He feels our emotions, He condescends to our necessities. Thus He comes near to us. God is nearer to humanity in the Gospel than He is in nature. He is one with it—EMMANUEL.

The other obstruction to the union of man to God is—

Secondly: *Guilty dread*. Was there an obstruction to this union on God's part? If so, who shall describe its *nature*? Some would-be theological standards speak of

it as a wrathful passion of the Divine mind which required an appeasement ; some, as an immense debt contracted by a sinful world which required a dischargement ; some, as a governmental difficulty in the Divine policy requiring the introduction of an elaborate expedient to obviate.\* I confess my utter inability to reconcile any such theories with my fundamental ideas of the Infinite Father, with the analogy of the universe, or general tenor of the Inspired Word. At the same time, that the intervention of Christ for sinners had a bearing on the Divine procedure, I accept as a fact—a fact, however, so transcending my understanding, that I feel I must set it forth, not in my own language, but in the words of that God who alone understands it.

Our point at present, however, is the obstruction to union *on man's part*. What is it ? It may be comprehended in two words. A *guilty dread*. Men, the world over, feel that they have sinned, and are liable to a terrible punishment. This sense of guilt hangs as a portentous cloud over the soul of the world. Men, by millions, often stagger with horror under its black shadow, and anxiously seek some shelter from the threatened storm. This *guilty dread* first drove man from his Maker. "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." The soul, from the laws of its nature, flees from the object of its dread. Fear is the centrifugal force of the spirit ; it drives it from its Maker. This dread of God is as universal as sin, and as deep as the heart of humanity. It accounts for all the horrid views that men have of their Maker, and for all their hostility to Him in heart and life.

Now, *how does God in Christ remove this ?* He comes to man in just such a form as is adapted to expel fear, and inspire hope and trust. In what form could He come but in the form of a *man* to effect this ? Would a revelation of Himself in all His *absolute* glory do it ? Language which we have elsewhere used may be employed here in answer to the question. No ! this, if it could be borne

\* See various opinions of the Atonement, under "The Pulpit and its Handmaids," of the present Number.

by mortals, would only raise the terror to a more overwhelming degree. Would a revelation of Himself through *angelic* natures do it? Poets and painters represent angels as charming creatures. The cherub is a lovely babe; the archangel a beautiful woman. All have countenances which beam with sentiments that enchant the heart; their forms are exquisite symmetry; they travel on wings streaked with celestial lustre. But this is all imagination. This is not true to man's moral conception. An angel is a terrible object to human nature. Angels, when they have appeared to men, have always evoked the utmost terror. Men feel like Eliphaz; their flesh creep, their bones tremble, and their hair stands erect with horror. The mariner may sing of "the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft;" but were that "sweet little cherub" to show his face, no tempest that could beat on the barque would awaken more panic.

How then? The Eternal, to disarm man of this terrible fear, comes to him in man's own nature. Are you afraid of a babe? Go to Bethlehem, and see that infant-type of beauty and innocence, before whom the Magi are bowing with mysterious reverence. God is in that lovely babe, and in it He says, "It is I, be not afraid." Are you afraid of a beautiful, frank, benign, pure-minded boy? Go into the temple at Jerusalem, and see Him sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them speak, and asking them questions. God is in that charming boy, and through Him He says, "It is I, be not afraid." Are you afraid of a poor, but honest, amiable, and noble-minded young man? Go into the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, and see Him earning His daily bread by the sweat of His brow. God is in that right manly young man. Are you afraid of a Teacher, who, free from all assumption of superiority, scholastic stiffness, and pedantic utterance, mingles with the crowd, and utters truth the most lofty to the imagination, the most reasonable to the intellect, the most real to the conscience, the most inspiring and ennobling to the heart? Transport yourselves in thought to the mountains of Capernaum, and the shores of Galilee, and *listen to Him who speaks as "never man spake."* God is in

that Teacher, and through Him He says, "It is I, be not afraid." Are you afraid of a philanthropist, the most tender in heart, the most earnest in affection, the most race-wide in sympathy? Follow Jesus of Nazareth during the three years of His public life, as He goes "about doing good." Count the diseased that He heals, the hungry that He feeds, and the disconsolate that He comforts. See Him at the grave of Lazarus, giving back from the grave the beloved brother of Mary and Martha. See Him arrest the funeral procession of Nain, and restore to the broken-hearted widow her only son. See Him on the Mount of Olives raining tears on the apprehended doom of Jerusalem. See Him in Gethsemane, *suffering for others*; and on the Cross, dying as a *sacrifice* for others; and with His dying breath, praying for His murderers. God is in that great philanthropist. Thus God in Christ removes this dread that repels the soul from His presence, and inspires the hope that attracts. He, in Christ, says to the world, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

II. IN HIM WE SEE A SPECIAL ATTRACTION OF MAN TO GOD. This is another step. He not only comes to man, but He attracts man to Himself. He does this—

First: By awakening the *highest gratitude*. Gratitude attracts, draws the soul into loving sympathy with its benefactor. Kindness is a magnet that draws the object to its author. God in Christ displays such infinite mercy as is adapted to inspire the soul with the strongest gratitude. Where is there mercy like this? He loved us and gave Himself for us. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

Secondly: He does this by awakening the *highest love*. Love attracts, love draws us into the presence of its object and makes us one with it, feel as it feels, and move as it moves. God in Christ is moral beauty in its sublimest form. All conceivable virtues centre there, and radiate thence, in

infinite perfection. Holiness, as it streams directly from the Absolute One, would be too strong for our vision, would dazzle and confound us, but in Christ it comes mildly and fascinatingly, reflected through the humanities of our nature.

Thirdly: He does this by awakening the *highest hope*. Hope draws the heart to its object. He from whom we expect good, will often have much of our thoughts and sympathies. What good does the Eternal hold out to us in Christ? Victory over death; eternal life; a heaven of everlasting joys; HIMSELF.

Thus we are drawn to Him. We feel that "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

The few thoughts which I have thus roughly and hastily sketched, are, I venture to hope, sufficient to show that the response of the Bible to "Man's Cry Concerning the Method of Union with God," is all that is needed, and all that can be *desired*. Through Christ, man may enjoy this *at-one-ment* with God.

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archaeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION NINTH.—Acts iii. 1—11.

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said,

Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up, and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."—Acts iii. 1—11.

SUBJECT:—*The Miracle at "The Beautiful Gate," a Fact, a Text, and an Epoch.*

THE miracle here recorded may be said to extend in its particulars and influences to the 22nd verse of the next chapter. The whole of the passage brings the miracle under our notice in three aspects:—As a *fact*, a *text*, and an *epoch*. The first eleven verses of this chapter presents it to us in the first aspect, and to this aspect we now give our attention.

I. We look at this miracle as a *FACT*. The exquisite simplicity with which it is stated, and the minute details specified, show—as plainly as anything can show—that it has nothing of the parabolic or mythical about it. It is a fact. If there be history in any literature, these verses are a piece of history. Several things here require attention.

First: *The authors of the miracle*. "Now Peter and John," &c. Who were the *instrumental* authors of the miracle? for Omnipotence was confessedly the *efficient* Agent. They were two of the apostles, who in mental character were the most dissimilar. John seems to have been calm, retiring, intuitionist, living not so much in the scientific forms or historical details of truth, as in the transcendental region of its spiritual elements. Peter, on the other hand, was restless, forward, and somewhat dogmatic. Albeit, no two of the apostles seem more intimately allied. They were on the mount of transfiguration together, they prepared the last



passover, and were in the garden of Gethsemane together; they were together, also, at the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection, and here we find them together "going up into the temple," &c. Though John knew Peter's defects and crimes, yet he seemed so to love him as to elect him as his companion. And Peter loved him in return. Chrysostom thought that Peter's question (John xxi. 21), "Lord, what shall this man do?" was prompted, not by idle curiosity as is generally supposed, but by strong affection—an affection making him anxious concerning the future of his friend. As a rule, natural diversities of mental temperament are the conditions of the closest friendship—the one would seem to be the complement of the other. The one supplements the other's deficiency, and thus dovetails into the other. Natural diversities, where there is moral purity, are social harmony.

Secondly: *The season of the miracle.* "At the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour." The hour of prayer, Lightfoot informs us, is the same in the Hebrew code. The examples of David, Daniel, Peter, as well as the authority of the Talmuds, teach us that the Jews had three hours for prayer daily: the third hour, nine o'clock in the morning; the sixth, twelve o'clock; and the ninth, three o'clock in the afternoon. These disciples of Christ did not give up the temple at once, they worshipped in the temple as they were wont. Observe—

Thirdly: *The subject of the miracle.* "And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple." In the next chapter, in the 22nd verse, we are told that he was above *forty years* old; upwards of forty years therefore he had lived a cripple. His lameness was not the result of accident or disease, or some infirmity that had come upon him after a period of physical perfection, but was a constitutional defect; he was born a cripple.

Thoughtful men have often asked the question, Why, under the government of a benevolent God, should such cases as this occur? Why should The Great One send men into the world, sometimes without the use of their limbs, cripples?

sometimes without the use of their eyes, blind ? sometimes without the use of their reason, idiots ?

Three facts may go a great way towards the obviation of the difficulty. (1) *That persons who come into the world in this state, being unconscious of physical perfection, feel not their condition as others.* Men who have never seen, know nothing of the blessedness of vision ; men who have never had the use of their limbs, know nothing of the pleasures of healthful exercise of the limbs ; men without reason, know nothing of the high delights of intellectual action. Hence persons of constitutional defect in form, organ, or limb, often display a peace of mind, and often a joy, at which others wonder. The subjects, therefore, of constitutional defects, feel not their loss as we are too prone to imagine.

Another fact which may contribute to the removal of the difficulty is—(2) *Such cases of organic imperfection serve by contrast to reveal the wonderful goodness of God.* In the material world, those parts of the earth that have been shattered by earthquakes, that lie in black desolation for the want of sun, that thunder in hideous chaos, serve to set off in more striking and soul-inspiring aspects the beauty and the order that reign everywhere but with such few exceptions. It is so with the human world in those cases of constitutional defects. A hunchback here, a blind man there, a cripple in another place, and an idiot there in the crowded walks of life, only serve to set off the goodness of God in the millions of men and women that are perfect. These are a few dark strokes which the Great Artist employs to set off the picture of the world in more striking aspects of beauty—a few of the rougher notes which the Great Musician uses to swell the chorus of universal order.

Another fact which contributes to the disposal of this difficulty is—(3) *They serve to inspire the physically perfect with gratitude to Heaven.* In the poor idiot, who stares vacantly at you, God says, “Be thankful to me for the light of reason.” In the poor blind man, groping his way in darkness, God says, “Be thankful to me for that eye that

gives you a bright world." In the poor cripple, that lies helpless by the wayside, God says to the passing crowd, "Be thankful to me for those agile limbs that carry you about." The blind, the idiotic, the crippled, the deformed, are sacrifices for the public good. They are God's homilies to the millions, demanding gratitude to Him for perfection in faculty and limb. Who can tell the spiritual good that this poor cripple accomplished, as he lay daily at the gate of the temple, observed by the hundreds that passed to and fro for worship? Observe—

Fourthly : *The scene of this miracle.* "At the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful." Some suppose this was the gate called Nicanor, which led to the court of the Gentiles, to the court of the women. Others suppose that it was the gate to the eastern entrance of the temple, commonly called Susan or Sushan ; the latter is the common and the more probable supposition. Josephus says, "Of the gates, nine of them were everywhere overlaid with gold and silver ; likewise the posts and the lintels. But one, without the temple, made of Corinthian brass, did much exceed in glory those that were overlaid with gold and silver." At this gate began the inner temple, as distinguished by Josephus from the outer temple ; this being the most frequented gate of the temple, and in the vicinity of Solomon's porch, the cripple was placed there as the best position for appealing for charity to the passing crowd.

His position there implies on behalf of himself and those who carried him to that spot—(1) *That his condition was such as had a claim upon the charity of others.* So it verily was. Such cases as his demand our compassion and our aid. They are means which God has appointed for the practical development of our benevolence. (2) *That the exercises of piety are favorable to the display of benevolence.* Why was he carried to the gate of the temple? Not merely because of the multitudes that passed to and fro ; other positions, such as the public streets and commercial thoroughfares, might have been selected, were this the only reason. He felt, undoubtedly, that the men who approached God in

worship, were, above all, men disposed to help his suffering children. Piety is the fountain of philanthropy. Indeed, there is no true love for man that does not spring from love to God. If a man loves the Infinite Father, he is sure to show sympathy with His suffering children. Observe—

Fifthly : *The method of the miracle.* Observe the order. (1) Peter arrested his attention. "Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us." It would seem that Peter and John both fastened their eyes on this man—threw their glance right into his. The eye, when it is the organ of a great living thought, is a mighty organ. A divine electricity often streams through it. They fastened their eyes on him, that he might fasten his eyes on them, so that a kind of spiritual contact might take place ; that they might connect him with the divine that was in them. (2) *Peter assured him of his own temporal poverty.* The poor man having had his attention arrested, expected that he should receive from them what he desired—alms ; but in this he was disappointed by the declaration of Peter, "Silver and gold have I none." As if he had said, "Money, I have none ; I am poor in this world ; but such as I have—the power that God has given me to help others—I will employ on your behalf. It is recorded that Thomas Aquinas, who was highly esteemed by Pope Innocent IV., going one day into the Pope's chamber where they were reckoning large sums of money, the Pope said to him, "You see that the Church is no longer in an age in which she can say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "True, holy father," said Aquinas ; "neither can she say, 'Rise up and walk.'" A Church may be secularly rich, and morally poor. A man like Peter may be without money, and yet have God with him and in him to work His will. (3) *Peter challenged his faith.* "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." They wrought their miracle in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The apostolic miracles were all performed in the name of Christ, according to His own command and promise. (Mark xvi. 17, 18 ; John xiv. 12 ; Acts ix. 34, ix. 40, x. 28, xiv. 9, xvi. 18.)

"In the name," that is, by the delegated power, "of Jesus of Nazareth." "Jesus of Nazareth," an allusion to the contempt with which that name was popularly regarded. "Rise up and walk." The man might have said, "You have mocked me ; I cannot move a limb, I have never walked a step." Peter's command implied that a *faith* and *volition* were required on the part of the cripple. (4) *Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up.* "In this, as in many of our Saviour's miracles," says a modern expositor, "the healing word was attended by an outward touch or gesture serving to connect the miraculous effect with the person by whom it was produced. (Matt. viii. 15, ix. 25, xiv. 31, xx. 34.) Such was the order or method, with which the miracle was wrought. The simple and minute account of the successive steps, gives to the whole narrative a living reality. Observe—

Sixthly : *The indubitableness of the miracle.* Immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength. "And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." (1) *Look at the effect upon the man himself.* The poor cripple who had never used his limbs for forty years, "stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." Though the cure was well-nigh instantaneous, yet there is a great gradation observed. First, strength came into "his feet and ancle bones ;" then he leaped up ; then stood ; then walked ; then entered the temple. The man's frame bounded with new energy ; his soul was flooded with divine joy and praise ; and his limbs were agile and blithe, expressing these emotions. Who can describe, nay—who can imagine—the man's emotions, &c. ? (2) *Look at the effect upon the people.* "All the people saw him walking and praising God." The miracle was *public*. It was not wrought in a corner ; it was almost in the height of day, and before the eye of the multitude. The subject of the miracle was well-known. "They knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple." Many had seen him lie there, year after year, a helpless cripple at the gate. The

people, therefore, were "filled with wonder and amazement." They were struck with astonishment. "All the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." The whole neighbourhood felt the shock; Jerusalem was awe-struck.

The use that Peter makes of this miracle as a Text, will appear in the next paragraph.

(To be continued.)

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## Germs of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*A Call to the Utmost Expansiveness in Religious Sympathy.*

"For all things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Forty-ninth.

**T**HE Church has not always treated its ministers rightly. Even in apostolic times, there were those professing to be disciples of Christ who would extol one minister to the depreciation of others. In the Church at Corinth, there were those who were of Paul, and those who were of Apollos. The attendants on a Christian ministry may be divided into two classes.

First : *Those who esteem the doctrine because of the teacher.* There are not a few in all congregations who accept doctrines simply because of the strong sympathies they have with the preacher. They become so strangely fascinated with the preacher, that they will accept the most crude, as profound; the most blasphemous, as sacred. Paul seems to have had those in his eye, when he wrote this chapter. He alludes to men in the Church at Corinth, who had been taken more with the teachers than with their doctrines. There were some there

who admired the philosophic reasoning of one preacher ; and others, the brilliant eloquence of another. This is a mistake, as bad as it is prevalent. The man who accepts a doctrine because of the teacher, sins against truth, and degrades his own nature. The other class of attendants on a Christian ministry, are—

Secondly : *Those who esteem the teacher because of his doctrines.* A man who preaches to them, they feel is estimable only as he embodies and propounds the true doctrines of the Gospel. However commanding his eloquence, beautiful his imagery, cogent his reasoning, or graceful his actions, if he is not the organ of the Divine in doctrine, he is to them as “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” The impropriety of glorying in teachers, rather than in their doctrines, is strikingly illustrated by three things in the text.

I. THE UNIVERSE IS FOR THE CHURCH. “All things are yours.” “All things”—not some things. And Paul proceeds to catalogue some of the “all things.”

First : *The ministry is for the Church.* “Whether Paul, or Apollos.” There is no agency on earth more valuable than the Christian ministry. In every way it serves man—intellectually, socially, materially. But its grand aim is to restore the human spirit to the knowledge, the image, and fellowship of its God. Now this ministry, in all its varieties, is the property of the Church. Why, then, should it glory in any one form ? Let those who like Paul, take Paul, and be thankful, and not find fault with those who regard Apollos as the most effective preacher. Pitting one minister against another is unworthy the Christian character.

Secondly : *The world is for the Church.* By the world we mean the earth with all its beauties and blessings. In the sense of *legal* possession, the world of course is not the property of Christians, nor is it the property of others. For he who claims the largest numbers of acres, has but a handbreadth compared with its numerous islands and vast continents. Yet in the highest sense it is the property of

the Christian. He feels an intense sympathy, a oneness, with God who created it; he rejoices in it as the workmanship of a Father's hands, as the expression of a Father's heart, the revelation of a Father's wisdom and power. Spiritually he appropriates the world to himself, he gathers up its truths, he cherishes its impressions, he drinks in its Divine Spirit.

Thirdly : *Life is the property of the Church.* "Or life." There are certain conditions in which we find men on this earth, in which they cannot be said to live. There are some for example chained in their cell under the sentence of death; they have forfeited their life—their life is not theirs—it belongs to the avenging justice of their country. There are others whose limbs and faculties are so paralyzed they can neither speak nor move. Life is not theirs. Morally, sinful man is this criminal; he is under the sentence of death—he is a paralytic—he is dead in trespasses and in sin; his life is not his. But life is the Christian's. His sentence of death is removed; his sins are pardoned, and he has a right to life again. His moral infirmities are healed, and all his faculties and powers are alive unto God. He has everlasting life; he is enjoying the right of life, he is prosecuting the mission of life, he is answering the grand purpose of life.

Fourthly : *Death is the property of the Church.* "Or death." What is death? Who shall define it? Who shall penetrate its meaning? The word has unfathomable depths of the wonderful and the terrible. But it is for the Christian: it is his. It delivers him from the imperfections of the present state; it frees him from all that is incompatible with his peace, his safety, and his advancement; it introduces him into the scenes, the services, the society of a blessed immortality. It is his. It is the last step in the pilgrimage, the last storm in the voyage, the last blow in the conflict.

Fifthly : *General events are the property of the Church.* "Things present, or things to come." An expression this, including all the circumstances of existence. "Things present," whatever their character—painful or pleasant—are ours. "Things to come." What things are those! What



things come to us in a day. But we are to live for ages without end. What things, therefore, are to come. Yet all these things are for us if we are genuine disciples of Christ.

Now, if all these things are for the Church, why should any of its members give themselves up to any one particular ministry to the disparagement of others? Why should they tie their faith to the teachings, or centre their sympathies in the person of any one man? If they are Christ's, all ministries are theirs: that not only of Paul, Cephas, and Apollos, but of universal events and agents.

Another thing which illustrates the impropriety of Christians glorying in particular teachers, rather than in their doctrines, is—

II. THE CHURCH IS FOR THE REDEEMER. "Ye are Christ's." There are two very different senses in which Christian men are Christ's. They are His—

First: *By His relationship to them.* He is the Creator of all. "By him were all things created, visible and invisible," &c. He is the Mediator of all. He tasted death for all men. To every man it is said, "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price," &c. Christian men are His—

Secondly: *By their pledge to Him.* They have pledged themselves to Him as their moral Leader. They have vowed unqualified obedience to His teaching. They have determined to know nothing amongst men. One is their master, even Christ. If they have thus consecrated themselves to Him as their Great Teacher, how absurd to glory in subordinate and fallible teachers. Why live under the rays of the rush-light, when you can bask under the beams of the sun? Follow a Plato in philosophy, a Solon in law, a Demosthenes in eloquence, a Bacon in sciences; but no one but Christ in religion. Value your Calvins, your Luthers, your Wesleys for what they are worth; but disclaim them as leaders. Fight not under their flag, wear not their name. Your Captain is Jesus, your banner the Cross, your name Christian.

Another thing which illustrates the impropriety of

Christians glorying in particular teachers, rather than in their doctrines is—

III. THE REDEEMER IS FOR GOD. "And Christ is God's." Jesus, as a Mediator, is the Messenger and Servant of the Eternal.

First : *Christ is God's Revealer*. He is the Word of God, (*Logos*). "No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten of the Father, he hath declared him." (1) He reveals Him in creation. God's creative plan was wrought out by the hand of Christ ; He, as the builder of the universe, revealed the mind of the infinite Architect. (2) He reveals Him in His personal ministry. He was the Image of the invisible God. He was the brightness of His Father's glory. His whole life here was a revelation of the Eternal, and amongst His last words on earth He said, "I have declared unto them thy name," &c.

Secondly : *Christ is God's Servant*. He came here to work out God's great plan of saving mercy. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," &c.

Christ is God's *Revealer* and *Servant* in a sense in which no other being in the universe is, and therefore to Him men should give their undivided attention.

Learn from this subject—First : *The infinite worth of Christianity*. It gives "*all things*" to its true disciples. None of the "*all things*" specified here, are *possessed* by those who are not His genuine disciples. The *ministry* is not theirs. If they attend preaching, they are mere instruments in the hands of the preacher ; they are carried away by the emotions of the hour. They do not possess the ministry, the ministry possesses them. The *world* is not theirs, however large a portion of it they claim legally. No portion of it is theirs, they are its. The *world* uses them as its tools. *Life* is not theirs : it is forfeited to justice ; it is paralyzed by disease. They have no true enjoyment in it. *Death* is not theirs, they are its. Through fear of it, they are all their lifetime subject to bondage. *Things present and things*

to come are not theirs; they are the mere creatures of circumstances. It is Christianity alone that makes all these things man's. It attunes the soul to the influences of God, as the Æolian harp is attuned to the winds; and every passing breeze in its history strikes out in music the anthem, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." Learn—Secondly : *The contemptibleness of religious sectarianism.* How wretchedly mean and base does sectarianism appear in the light of this subject. The men who glory in their own theological peculiarities, ecclesiastical sect, and religious teachers, have never felt the grandeur contained in the text, that the universe is for the Church, the Church is for Christ, and that Christ is for God.

Brothers, One is our Master, even Christ. He is our Leader in things Divine. Let us test the doctrine of other teachers by His utterances. Let us learn of Him. Take the truth as it comes warm and fresh from His lips. His truth is for all. As the sun sheds his rays on all without distinction, as the flowers unfold beauty to every eye, as the winds breathe music to every ear, as the circling seasons pour in periodic order Heaven's blessings on all, so Christ's words are for all who have ears to hear.



SUBJECT :—*The Natural illustrative of the Spiritual.*

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 8.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fiftieth.

I. That the action of the Spirit, like the action of the wind, is BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONTROL. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." The wind is produced by, and moves in accordance with, certain laws which the Creator has ordained, and which His continual Providence keeps in exercise; it is, therefore, constantly under His immediate guidance, obedient to His command, and subject to His control. "He causeth His wind to blow." (Psalm cxlvii. 18.) "Stormy wind fulfilling His word." (Psalm cxlviii. 8.) The influence or action of the Spirit is

likewise under Divine guidance and restraint, and is subject to the volitions of the Divine will ; " All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Cor. xii. 11.) But the action of the Spirit, and the action of the wind, while they are alike under Divine government, they are alike beyond human control. When they, obedient to God's will, are inactive, human power cannot evoke their exercise ; or when that will causes their operation, human might cannot influence them in their course. We often speak of the freedom of the wind, whether in the summer's zephyr or the winter's storm ; in either case it is reckless alike of our approval or dismay, our interest or our will. We are ignorant of the exact moment the storm rises or ceases. It gushes as from mountain caves, sounds among the hills, rushes down the valleys, sweeps across the plain and over the raging sea. The angel of the storm looses the steeds of the tempest, and away they bound as though intoxicated with liberty, careering in the wildness of unbridled freedom. We have no power over the tempest either to raise or quell it. It may uproot the forest trees, shatter the cotter's home, and threaten destruction to the drifting barque ; and who of us can stay it in its course, or curb its reckless wrath ? It laughs to scorn the impotency of the human voice, and the weakness of human might. On, on it speeds, even though a prince command, or nations rise to oppose. Even so the action of the Spirit is free, and beyond the range of human control ; for the will and power to which it is subject is superhuman and Divine. Spiritual influences for good, move where, when, and how God pleases. They may gently operate on the heart of childhood, to draw the early affection to the Source of holy love ; or they may come in the awakening and startling influences felt in riper years. They may be heard in the whisperings of the still, small voice ; or in the thunder-tones which arouse the spiritually dead. They may come in the gentle breathing, as on Lydia's heart ; or, as at Pentecost, in the sound as of a rushing, mighty wind. But however they come, we know

their source is God, and that He sent them, and directed them whither they should go. We cannot coerce the Divine will ; and except God willed it, no effort on our part, nor the united effort of all the world, could cause a breath to breathe, or a solitary influence to be felt ; but God—who is “no respecter of persons,” and is infinite in His knowledge, supreme in His wisdom, and boundless in His love—cannot err, He does “all things well.” In the world of matter there is nothing which of itself is capable of causing or resisting motion ; but in the world of mind, we discern a power which is capable of causing or resisting within a certain sphere, and that is the faculty of the will, which will is never violated by any Divine decree. Rather, in the Divine government, God treats men as moral beings, within whose reach He has placed two powers, viz., *the power of prayer*, and *the power of resistance*.

*The power of prayer.* It is our blessed privilege, because of the mercy of God in Christ, to approach the throne of grace as suppliants, and there to express our wants, confident that whatsoever we ask agreeably to His will, in the name of Jesus, believing, we shall receive. As the seaman may pray for favorable winds, so we may pray for spiritual influences, encouraged by the assurance that “He is willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.” Seeing that God sitteth in the circle of the heavens, it is not for us to command, but humbly and reverently, as helpless and dependent beings, to fall at His feet, to breathe out our desires, to plead the promises, and to him who asks aright, God will speak the word and send forth the power. Thus, while human power is in itself perfect weakness, it becomes mighty, in that it has access to Him who presideth and “ruleth over all.”

*The power of resistance.* It is possible for the human will to be in antagonism to the Divine, even as it was amongst those to whom it was said, “Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost ; as your fathers did, so do ye.” It is possible for a seaman, when the favorable wind springs up, to neglect the

opportunity, to leave the sails in their foldings, and the anchors resting in their security; instead of calling all hands to work, to raise the anchors, to spread the sails, and to direct the prow. So it is possible for souls to neglect the "acceptable time," and "the day of salvation;" over whom the Saviour weeps, "How oft would I, but ye would not!" Let us beware of resisting the gracious strivings, of "quenching the Spirit" but; "work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in us, to will and to do of his own good pleasure," and the spirit of God brooding over our hearts, shall cause the "new creation" to emerge from the chaos of disordered nature, and giving all the glory to Jehovah we shall say, "Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth."

II. The action of the Spirit, like the action of the wind, is MANIFEST TO HUMAN SENSIBILITY. "Thou hearest the sound thereof." There may be much that is hidden and obscured, connected with the action of both the wind and the Spirit, yet this much we do know concerning them—they manifest themselves; they give such evidence of their existence as precludes the probability of ignorance, or doubt, for at least one of our senses bears witness to their presence: *we hear the wind and we feel the Spirit*. He, who is the subject of spiritual influences, especially in the work of regeneration, will be as truly assured of their operation, as he who hears will be of the presence of the wind when the breezes sweep and play around him; and the one case is just as the other. *The wind manifests itself*. The sailor on the ocean in a storm is aware of it: he hears it as it comes breathing from across the sea, stirring the waves, rocking his vessel, whistling among the cordage, and filling and swelling the sails; he knows when it increases in violence, for he hears it rushing along with greater fury, and he cannot be mistaken in its hoarse, sad moaning, as it sweeps on its strong wings over the foaming sea. Seated in our quiet home, we know when the storm rages, for it thunders down the aisles of forest trees, rattles

the window panes, sighs in the crevices, and, as each gust rushes past, we thank God for a shelter and a home. "Thou hearest the sound thereof." "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." The fact of regeneration is not one of mere speculation, and no one need be in doubt as to whether or not it has passed upon him ; it always gives the highest and most satisfactory proofs of its existence, even that deep consciousness, that heartfelt experience, which cannot deceive. On this matter, metaphysical enquiries will be instituted in vain, and the mere student will wander in labyrinthine bewilderment, while the subject of this change will rest in the satisfaction of that undoubted evidence which his heart knows, for the operations of God's Spirit are always felt. Spirits can hold converse with spirits without any material vehicle of thought, and can immediately act and re-act upon one another ; else what communion could the spirits of the departed enjoy ? Can anything be too hard for the Great Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son. He can directly influence the heart and reach the soul ; He sends forth His power and the spiritual world feels the influence ; His breath Divine breathes over the world of mind, and it stirs the conscience, alarms the fear, excites the hope, and awakens the love. As the wind acts on the Æolian harp, and evokes its symphonies, awaking music from its strings, so the celestial breath moves across the soul, and the chords of the heart vibrate to its influence. He who is "born of the Spirit" must be conscious of it. The heavenly aspirations which move his soul—the Divine smile which kindles the affections of his heart—the unruffled peace which dwells within his breast—the holy love which fills every capacity of his higher nature—all bear evidence to the change. He knows he has passed from death unto life, for the pulsations of that new and Divine life are felt within ; he knows he has emerged from the darkness into the light, for his rejoicing soul rises on upborne wing towards the true light, and basks in its unsullied beams. He may be unable to satisfy sceptical inquirers, and fail to tell them how the

influences came, when he felt the first stirring in his heart, or the exact method of operation ; he may be utterly unable to philosophize on spiritual influences, yet he is not confounded ; with the consciousness of inward experience he quails not before even the phalanx of scepticism, but can look to Him who knows the heart, and say, " Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee ;" and his answer to the inquiring world is—"This one thing I know, that, Whereas I was blind, now I see." " I know, because He has manifested Himself to me, as He does not unto the world." " I know that my Redeemer liveth :"—" I know that old things have passed away, and all things have become new." This is not a solitary experience, but that of every individual believer ; this rule knows no exception, and admits of no change—" For so is *every one* that is born of the Spirit."

III. The action of the Spirit, like the action of the wind, is ABOVE HUMAN COMPREHENSION. The human mind being finite, its capacity of comprehension is limited to a contracted range. So, that, though there is much that we may bring to the bar of human reason for adjudication, yet there is much more which it cannot understand, there are intricacies which its keenest discernment cannot unravel, and problems which it cannot solve. There is a circle within which reason rules, but beyond which lies the domain of mystery, stretching away in a distance which it cannot penetrate, into heights which it cannot reach, and depths which it cannot sound. As we meditate on the Spirit's influence, we must feel that we approach the mysterious—yet, we are not, on that account, to reject or despise spiritual influences altogether, for there are mysteries connected with other things, the existence of which the most sceptical dare not deny. Who can explain the action of the unchained and inconstant wind ? We may hear its rushings, and see its effects—but who can tell whence it came, from what place it sprung, and where its source may be found ? Did it start from beside the river, or from beyond the sea ? Did it issue from the forest, from among the hills,



or from the mountain cave? What was the exact point from which it started on its journey? Canst thou tell? Or knowest thou its route; canst thou enumerate the flowers it may kiss, the seas it may cross, the lands it may visit, or the skies it may sweep? When will it breathe with gentle cadence, or swell with tempestuous wrath—when will it whirl in eddies, or rush in fitful gusts, or continuous storm? Canst thou tell? or knowest thou its destined end, the goal where its race will finish, the barrier which it cannot pass, the boundary line which marks its limits, the exact spot to where it may go, but where it must curb its fury, and go no farther? Canst thou tell? Human understanding stands appalled in presence of such questions as these. Reason, however enlightened, cannot explore the wonders of

“That strange, mysterious thing we call  
The breeze, the air, the wind;  
We call it so, but know no more,  
’Tis mystery, like the mind.”

Thou “canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.” Even “so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” We cannot tell when the Spirit’s influences may come, or how they may come, or when the deepest impressions may be made upon the soul. We know not through what channel they may come to us, or how they may pass from us to others. We cannot explain their operation in the process of regeneration; *that* takes place in the world of mind, and we are unable to philosophize concerning it, for we stand on the verge of mystery, and the eye of reason is too dull to pierce the vista and discern the subtle workings. Infidelity may smile when we speak of such influences of God’s Spirit on the human soul, and inquire, How can spirit act on spirit so as to produce such strange results? How can One unseen, without any mediation, so move upon the heart as to effect such a wonderful transformation? How does God create a soul anew, and transform it into His own image? And we must confess we do not know, and cannot tell. But we may retort, and ask him to explain

the action of the wind, its source and destination,—the means by which its influence on the soil produces certain agricultural benefits, or how it purifies the atmosphere of poisonous vapour and foul exhalations; and if he cannot understand or explain these, should he be incredulous because he cannot explain how the beneficial effects are produced by the breath Divine on the desert of the soul, or how it is purified and imbued with eternal life? If he understood not natural things, how shall he understand spiritual things? or, as the Saviour said to Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things.”

That Saviour has ascended on high that he may send down the promised Comforter; and he has promised “to pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh.” It becomes us, as needy creatures, to be diligent in the use of the means, and, like the praying, believing, waiting ones at Pentecost—should we sincerely supplicate, and patiently wait, with unwavering confidence and earnest exhortation, and the answer will come—it *must* come. There may be no sound, or visible sign, but the breath celestial will be felt upon the soul, and the fire of Divine love will kindle in the heart.

WILLIAM A. BLAKE.

## Biblical Criticism.

THE CODEX SINAITICUS :—*Various Readings.*

THIS Codex abounds with certain modes of spelling which depart from the familiar orthographic standard. For instance, *ε* is used for *αι*, *αι* for *ε*, *ι* for *ει*, *ει* for *ι*, *υ* for *ου*, and sometimes there is an interchange of *υ* and *η*, *ου* and *ω*, and *ο* and *ω*. The Codex generally has *υ* before a consonant, in the third person singular of verbs in *ε*, and in the dative plural of substantives and adjectives in *ι*. Also, *σ* is retained in *ουτως* before a consonant. There is a like looseness with regard to grammatical inflexion. For instance, the accusative of nouns

increasing in the genitive often ends in *αν* instead of *α*. The second person plural of the second aorist sometimes ends in *ατε*, and sometimes in *αται*. Sometimes the first singular of the second aorist middle ends in *αμην*, the third in *ατο*, the first person plural active in *αμεν*, and the participle in *αμενος*. The third person plural has *αν* often for *ον*, and in the perfect for *ασι*. The imperative second aorist has *ατω* for *ετω*. The augment is used for the reduplication in the perfect, and there is a general looseness in the use of the augment. Verbs in *εω* are used instead of *αω*, and in *αω* instead of *εω*; *ουκ* and *ουχ* are irregularly interchanged. In *λαμβάνω* and its compounds, the *μ* is always retained before the *ψ*. There are other similar instances of deviation from the usual grammatical forms, which are not so easily classified.

To give the reader some notion of the appearance of the text, we subjoin one verse which has some of these characteristics, Matt. xv. 13 :—

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθὶς εἶπεν πᾶσα φύτις ἣν οὐκ ἐφύτευσεν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ οὐράνιος ἐκριζωθήσεται.

The most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament resemble the Codex Sinaiticus in this respect; so that it is justly to be regarded as an evidence in favor of the very high antiquity of the manuscript in question. In later manuscripts, the inflexion has been gradually made to approximate and conform to a more correct usage. We do not, of course, reckon these merely orthographical and grammatical deviations as Various Readings; but shall now proceed to catalogue many of those which may really be regarded as such. To include every one would be practically impossible in our limits; we shall therefore confine ourselves to those which are most important. Some of them have been anticipated by the critical texts of Lachmann and Tischendorf, before the discovery of the present Codex; and where this is the case, the highest probability of genuineness may be considered to attach to such readings. We shall distribute them under the heads of *Addition*, *Omission* and *Substitution*, beginning with the Gospel according to Matthew.

## ADDITIONS.

Matt. vii. 29.—*αυτῶν* after *γραμματεῖς*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. viii. 7.—*ακολουθει μοι* before *εγω*.

Matt. viii. 9.—*τασσομενος* after *εξουσιαν*. So also Lachmann.

Matt. viii. 13.—At the end of the verse this is added, *και υποστρεψας ο εκατονταρχος εις τον οικον αυτου εν αυτη τη ὥρᾳ εὔρεν τον παιδα ὑγιαινοντα*.

Matt. ix. 35.—At the end of the verse is added, *και ηκολουθησαν αυτω*.

Matt. x. 12.—At the end, *λεγοντες ειρηνη τῷ οικῷ τουτω*.

Matt. xiv. 29.—After *ελθειν*, *ηλθεν ουν*.

Matt. xxiii. 4.—*μεγαλα*, before *βαρεα*.

Matt. xxiv. 10.—*εις θλιψιν*, after *παραῶσουσιν*.

Matt. xxiv. 36.—*ουδε ο υιος*, before *ει μη*.

Matt. xxviii. 12.—*εποιησαν και*, between *συμβουλιον* and *λαλῶντες*.

## OMISSIONS.

Matt. v. 22.—*εκῇ* omitted. So also Lachmann and Tischendorf.

Matt. v. 44.—*ευλογεῖτε τους καταρωμενους ὑμᾶς, καλῶς ποιεῖτε τους μισοῦντας ὑμᾶς*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. v. 44.—*επηραζοντων ὑμᾶς και*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. vi. 4, 6, 18.—The words *εν τῷ φανερω* are wanting in all these verses. So also with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. vi. 13.—The words at the end of the Lord's Prayer, *οτι σου εστιν ἡ βασιλεια και ἡ δυναμις και ἡ δοξα εις τους αιῶνας, αμην*, are wanting. So also with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. viii. 29.—*Ιησοῦ*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. ix. 13.—*εις μετανοιαν*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xii. 35.—τῆς καρδίας. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xiv. 30.—ισχυρον. The Vatican has this word, *but not by the original scribe*. It is also wanting in an important cursive manuscript, a collation of which was published by Tregelles in 1857.

Matt. xv. 14.—τυφλῶν.

Matt. xvi. 2.—From οψίας in this verse, to the end of the verse following, is wanting.

Matt. xvi. 20.—Ιησοῦς before ὁ Χριστός is absent. So also with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles. (See list of *Substitutions*.)

Matt. xvii. 11.—πρῶτον. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xvii. 21.—τοῦτο δὲ το γένος οὐκ ἐκπορεύεται, εἰ μὴ ἐν προσευχῇ καὶ νηστείᾳ. All this was left out by the original scribe, but was supplied by a corrector of about the seventh century. Only, instead of ἐκπορεύεται, he writes ἐκβάλλεται.

Matt. xviii. 11.—ἦλθε γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου σῶσαι το ἀπολωλός. This verse is omitted also in the editions of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xx. 7.—καὶ ὁ ἐὰν ᾖ ἔκαιον ληψέσθε. So with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xx. 16.—πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰσι κλητοὶ, ὀλιγοὶ δὲ ἐκλεκτοί.

Matt. xx. 22.—καὶ το βαπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι, βαπτισθῆναι. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xx. 23.—καὶ το βαπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆσεσθε. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxiii. 4.—καὶ ἐνσβαστακτα.

Matt. xxiii. 8.—ὁ Χριστός. So also with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxiii. 13.—This whole verse is omitted. So also with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxiii. 19.—μωροὶ καὶ.

Matt. xxiii. 35.—υἱὸν Βαρχιόν. These words were omitted by the original scribe, but were inserted by one of the later revisers. This omission should be noticed in discussing the

difficulty connected with the received reading. (See Alford *in loco*.)

Matt. xxiv. 10.—και μισησουσιν αλληλους.

Matt. xxiv. 35.—This whole verse was omitted by the original scribe, but supplied by one of the later revisers.

Matt. xxv. 13.—εν ᾧ ὁ υἱος τοῦ ἀνθρωπου ἐρχεται. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxvi. 28.—The second το and καινης.

Matt. xxvi. 42.—το ποτηριον. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxvi. 60.—The second ουχ εὔρον.

Matt. xxvii. 35.—ἵνα πληροθῇ το ῥηθεν ὑπο τοῦ προφητου, ἱαμερισαντο τα ἱματια μου ἑαυτοῖς, και ἐπι τον ἱματισμον μου εἶβαλον κληρον. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxvii. 56.—Μαρια ἡ Μαγδαληνη και. This was omitted by the original scribes, but inserted by one of the later revisers.

Matt. xxvii. 64.—νυκτος. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxviii. 2.—απο τῆς θυρας. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxviii. 9.—ὥς δε ἐπορευοντο ἀπαγγεῖλαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxviii. 20.—αμεν.

#### SUBSTITUTIONS.

Matt. v. 47.—εθνικοι το αυτο, for τελῶναι οὕτω. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. vi. 1.—δικαιοσυνην, for ελεημοσυνην. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf and Tregelles. This δικαιοσυνη is a generic term including the three duties afterwards treated of; namely, ελεημοσυνη, προσευχη and νηστεια. (Compare v. 20.)

Matt. vii. 21.—τα θεληματα for το θελημα.

Matt. viii. 5.—καφαρναουμ for καπερναουμ. So also in iv. 13; xi. 23; xvii. 24. Lachmann, Tischendorf and Tregelles read the same in all these places.

Matt. viii. 29.—Instead of *προ καιροῦ βασανισαι ἡμᾶς*, the Codex has *ἡμᾶς ἀπολεσαι προ καιρου*.

Matt. ix. 36.—Instead of *ἐκλελυμεμοι*, we read *εσκυλμενοι*. So also in Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. x. 25.—Instead of *Βεελζεβουλ*, we read *Βεεζεβουλ*. The same in xii. 24, 27.

Matt. xi. 2.—*δια* for *δυο*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xi. 19.—*εργων* for *τεκνων*. A curious variation.

Matt. xi. 23.—This verse stands thus : *και συ καφαρναουμ μη εως ουρανου υψωθηση, εως ρδου καταβιβασθηση· οτι ει εν Σοδομοις εγενηθησαν αι δυναμεις (a mis-spelling) αι γενομεναι εν σοι, εμεινεν αν μεχρι της σημερον*.

Matt. xii. 6.—*μιζον* (the first syllable mis-spelt) for *μειζων*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xiii. 55.—The first scribe probably wrote *Ιωαννης* (not *Ιωσης*); then an early reviser converted it into *Ιωσηφ*, which is also the reading of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xiv. 15.—*χωρας* for *κωμας*.

Matt. xv. 5.—Instead of *και* the original scribe wrote *ουθεν εστιν*; but this is rejected by one of the earlier correctors.

Matt. xv. 39.—*Μαγαδαν* for *Μαγδαλα*. So with Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xvi. 21.—*Ιησοῦς Χριστος* instead of *ὁ Ιησοῦς*. This is interesting when compared with the preceding verse. (See list of *Omissions*.)

Matt. xvii. 4.—*ποιησω* for *ποιησωμεν*. So Lachmann and Tischendorf.

Matt. xvii. 20.—*ολιγοπιστιαν* for *απιστιαν*. So Lachmann and Tregelles.

Matt. xix. 17.—Instead of *τι με λεγεις αγαθον*; *ουδεις αγαθος ει μη εις ὁ Θεος*, our Codex reads thus : *τι μη ερωτης περι του αγαθου*; *εις εστιν ὁ αγαθος*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xix. 21.—*γενεσθε* (correctly spelt would be *γενεσθαι*) for *ειναι*.

In the 24th verse of this chapter, our Codex reads *καμηλον* as the received text ; not *καμιλον*.

Matt. xxii. 10.—*νυμφων* for *γαμος*.

Matt. xxii. 25.—*γημας* for *γαμψας*. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxii. 44.—*ὑποκατω* for *ὑποποδιον*.

Matt. xxiv. 42.—*ἡμερα* for *ώρα*. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxiv. 45.—*καταστησει* for *κατεστησεν*. This reading seems to give a better sense. Also, in this verse, we have *ουκίας* for *θεραπειας*.

Matt. xxv. 24.—*ανθρωπος ανστηρος εἷ*, for *οκληρος εἷ ανθρωπος*.

Matt. xxvii. 4.—*οψη* for *οψει*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Matt. xxvii. 10.—*εδωκα* for *εδωκαν*.

Matt. xxvii. 56.—*Μαρια ἡ Ἰωσηφ* for *Ἰωση μητηρ*. But one of the later revisers puts *ἡ Ἰωση μητηρ*. Also we have in the same verse, *Μαρια ἡ*, for the second *μητηρ*. But the same reviser agrees with the received text.

We shall return to this subject in the next number.

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## The Chair of Theology.

[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

THE necessity, especially in the present day, of clear notions concerning the mutual relations of philosophy and theology, may render a few suggestions on the subject appropriate in this place, before proceeding to the particulars of theology itself.

We believe that the proposition will bear the severest test, that the Scriptural revelation is not chiefly or considerably a philosophical doctrine, but an enlargement of the sphere of



practical life. It is true that the apostles Paul, James, and John, sometimes make statements which coincide with the results of certain schools of philosophy ; and such statements are to be found also here and there in the Old Testament. These are, undoubtedly, to be received on the authority of the writers of Scripture. Yet the main Object of revelation is a Person, namely, Christ. We have His earthly history, which is quite as affecting to the peasant as to the philosopher ; and we are instructed concerning His relation to God, whose existence is the object of an intuition of our common reason. But we are made conversant with persons, not by philosophy, but in the region of practical life. If God has spoken, and manifested Himself as a Person, philosophy can no more set aside or modify the fact, than it can practically annihilate the men and women who are around us.

The respective regions of philosophy and of practical life, are totally distinct ; and our experimental knowledge of the world is instinctively felt to be something infinitely firmer, safer, and of more importance than any speculation concerning it. We can get along very well in secular affairs without a theory of being ; and if we have such a system, it does not generally in the smallest degree alter our practical beliefs, or modify our course. Bishop Berkeley disbelieved the existence of matter, regarding the conception as groundless and absurd ; and David Hume could find no evidence of the existence, either of matter, of other men, or even of himself. Yet these two philosophers were the same in intercourse with their fellows, and in their pecuniary dealings, as men who believe not only in qualities and impressions, but also in a substratum. They believed in the fecundity of the soil, the stability of masonry, the taste of meat, the usefulness of money, and the agreeableness of company. So you may hold, if it please you, philosophical theories side by side with your practical Christian theology ; but if you confound the one with the other, or allow of mutual interference, you are in error.

Such confusion is involved in the independent adoption of some intellectual or moral principle, and applying this to the

teachings of Scripture so as to make them harmonize with it. The endeavor to reduce all Scriptural teaching under the heads of such principles, is most emphatically to be condemned, as both unscientific and unchristian. All pronouncing, further than is warranted by express Scripture statements, concerning the grand aim of God in creation, or in revelation, or in the salvation of man, is also to be carefully shunned.

Yet we are far from counselling or approving of a slavish adherence to the mere letter of Scripture. Truth, as a whole, constitutes, of course, a system. The agreement of the truth revealed, with that which we know apart from revelation, accredits, in the first instance, the revelation itself. A passage of Scripture very often contains a principle of wide comprehensiveness, and of vital ramifications. The fragments of truth which are revealed for the guidance of our lives, have, each of them, a systematic tendency. The sum of revealed truth—albeit there are apparent discrepancies which our minds cannot always reconcile—has a manifest connexion and unity. One of the most convincing proofs to a candid mind of the Divinity of the Bible is, the mutual relation of the various fragmentary revelations made in various ages, a relation which often outstrips the knowledge of the successive writers of Scripture themselves, but is evident to us who are in possession of the whole.

It may also be justly contended, that a true theory of the dictates of our reason—a theory which brings them up into clear recognition by the understanding—is almost certain to be favorable to the proper working of reason itself ; and that a false theory is as certain, so far as it influences us at all, to be injurious. A certain theory of fate and necessity renders the Turks slothful. Therefore, philosophy, as the science, that is, the orderly account, of the results of intuition, will be helpful to the theologian. His original intuitions have not been impeded by an obstructive element, but rather facilitated by the co-operation of another faculty ; and now that he is come to apply himself to the Scriptures, the same condition is in his favor. All this must be admitted ; and it does not in the slightest degree tend to confound the two sciences.

Again, when we say that philosophy has little or no connexion with theology, we wish the important difference between philosophy and psychology to be distinctly held in view. Philosophy is the science of being, psychology an inductive science of the mental phenomena. Although ontology has no direct connexion with theology, the same cannot be said of the science of mind. Since the Scriptures, throughout, deal with mind, the better we are acquainted with mental phenomena, the better shall we be prepared to understand and to apply Scripture. Besides, it is evident that a certain theory of human nature runs through Scripture itself. It is alluded to in the Old Testament, and often in the writings of the apostle Paul. Duly to elicit and expound this, it is necessary to be acquainted with the standard teachers of the science.

Finally, since the processes whereby Scriptural doctrines are ascertained and classified are logical, it is obvious that the study of logic is preliminary to theology. One main reason why the old theology is so immeasurably superior to the new, is that the old writers were expert logicians. Their object was lawfully and clearly defined; they kept it steadily in view; and they knew and steadily followed the proper method of procedure. Hence it is that their doctrinal structures have endured all the storms of criticism, and will remain lasting monuments of the clearheadedness of the builders, when more modern and pretentious, but less substantial erections, shall one after another have crumbled to dust.

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## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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*Whitsunday.*

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."—Eph. iv. 30.

EVERY Sunday, brethren, in the midst of Divine Service, we stand up and make the solemn and sublime confession, "I

believe in the Holy Ghost." Like every other article of our precious Creed, this is full of the deepest and most glorious meaning. It concerns the Great Object of worship, and it concerns Him as the gracious Agent by whom the revelation of God in Christ is made effective, by whom the facts of it are unfolded and applied, our union with Christ is accomplished, and the consequences of it are carried on through all our mortal discipline, until their consummation in eternal glory. It is the Spirit who, by His presence, sanctifies the body of the Church, as formerly He consecrated the temple of the body of Christ. By His presence, the Church is diversified from the world, from any assembly brought together by the will of man. His presence in the Church characterizes the Gospel economy. As once He inspired prophets and apostles, so now the efficacy of prayers with God, the power of the Word with men, and the grace of the sacraments, are due to His operation. Let these weighty truths be fully in our minds, let these rich blessings call forth our devout thankfulness, whenever we are permitted to join in the confession, "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

The Church has held from the beginning the doctrine which an intelligent and fair inquirer would learn from Holy Scripture, that the Holy Ghost is truly and properly God, "The Lord and the Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified." "There are," says St. Paul, "diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." (1 Cor. xii. 6.) The Divine operations on the human mind, whereby it is regenerated, renewed, sanctified, and finally made perfect, are ascribed to the Spirit. To Him is ascribed also the resurrection of the dead. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is spoken of by our Lord as an unpardonable sin. And in the form of Baptism, the Spirit's name is joined with those of the Father and the Son. The Spirit is ever spoken of in Scripture, not as an act, but as an Agent; not as power, but as the possessor and exerciser of power; not as inspiration, or an inspiring influence, but as the Inspirer; not as comforting grace, but as the Comforter; as *truly and properly a Divine Person, willing, loving and acting.*

Of this Holy Spirit, St. Paul affirms, "Whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The day of redemption—that is, the time when all God's promises of blessing to us in Jesus Christ will be fulfilled. When the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt, God sent Moses to them with promises. He promised to deliver them, and to bring them into "a land flowing with milk and honey," where He would dwell among them and be their God. He then proceeded to plague Pharaoh, until consent for their departure was wrung from him. When the faithless King pursued them, God overthrew him and his host in the Red Sea. Still, though Moses in the morning sang a song of triumph on the shore, yet this was not the complete day of redemption. By and by the law was given, and the tabernacle erected and filled with the Lord's glory. Neither was this, however, the day of full redemption. But when the waters of the Jordan had divided before the sacred ark, and the walls of Jericho had fallen, and the nations of Canaan had been driven out, and the chosen people had been settled in peaceful possession of the land; then the victorious and now aged Joshua could appeal to their experience and say: "Ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one good thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." (Josh. xxiii. 14.) That, at length, was the day of their redemption.

So, brethren, when all which God has promised to us in Christ shall have been fulfilled; when each of us that endureth to the end has vanquished the world, the flesh, and the devil; when, after daily partaking of manna from the skies, we have seen the waters of the darker Jordan divide; when, finally, the whole Church of God—some awakened from their graves at the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, others changed in the twinkling of an eye—have arisen to meet the Lord in the air, to be forever with Him; when they have heard the rapturous invitation, "Come ye blessed of my Father," and through their Lord, the conquerors of sin, death, and all evil, have with Him entered upon the eternal kingdom; then will have at last arrived the time named in the text as the day of redemption.

If we have in some measure escaped the bondage of sin, we are still in the wilderness of the world. Great, and rich, and many as are our mercies, our present state is not to be compared with the future we hope for. Sin is still within us, enemies surround us in the form of temptations, afflictions try, and our weak hearts by reason of difficulty are sometimes ready to despond.

“ In the waste howling wilderness,  
The Church is wandering still.”

Yet as the Israelites of old were sealed as God's people, and sealed for Canaan, by rites and ceremonies of the law, so we have been sealed for Christ. As the owner marks his sheep, that he and others may know them wherever they may be wandering, so Christ set His own mark upon us in baptism; and every striving of the Spirit within, every gracious renewal, every tear of penitence, every action of faith and obedience, hath made that sacred mark clearer and brighter. “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” (2 Cor. i. 22.) We are “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,” unto the day of redemption.

Such, brethren, is the affecting truth. Let us now come to the well-grounded exhortation. *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* This exhortation implies another truth, which may startle some of us, and which is, that *the Holy Spirit is capable of grief*, and that *it is in our power to grieve Him*. How is this? We are compelled to believe that when men sin, there is something in the Divine nature which is best represented to us by the word *grief*. It does no more dishonor to God to say that He can grieve, than to say that He can love. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive how He could love such creatures as we are, without grief proportioned to our unhappy weakness and obstinacy, grief arising from His very love to us. We can only know God by knowing ourselves. When, then, a godly and tender mother sees the son she bare, and watched over, and taught, and trained, and warned, and prayed for, running heedlessly downward as if bent on destruction, the mother cannot but grieve.

So with the Spirit. Being the Spirit of love, He grieves over the sins of men. He is the Spirit of Christ, who lamented the hardness of the Scribes and Pharisees, who wept over Jerusalem when her day of grace was gone. Brethren, we have heard of God's anger against sin, we have trembled at the sound of the *wrath to come*. Have we ever sufficiently taken His *grief* to heart? "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

Our sins grieve the Spirit *because they are contrary to His nature as the Holy Spirit*. It may be profitable for us here to refer to the sins which St. Paul particularly mentions in connexion with the text, and against which he particularly cautions us. St. Paul is that one of all the writers of Holy Scripture, who, in the high mysteries of his doctrine, requires the greatest learning and stability in his readers, lest his meaning be wrested and misunderstood. How far he *has* been wrested by some, will not perhaps be fully known until the Day of Judgment. His Epistles are full of doctrinal truth. But they are also intensely practical; and all his truth he labors to connect at once with duty, to make it suggestive of godliness, justice, kindness, purity and temperance. By the former part of this Epistle to the Ephesians, if taken alone, it might have been supposed, that his main reason for writing was revelation of truth; in order that, to use his own words, "we might understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Yet the last three chapters are, according to his wont, entirely filled with precepts. If we neglect these, we shall grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Let us read some of them:—"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk. . . . Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ. . . . That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour:

for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Observe here, that as it is the Spirit of God who helps us to put off the old man, who renews us, and after God creates the new man in righteousness and holiness, all contrary tendencies in us occasion grief to Him. Observe what a reason is given for speaking truth. "We are members one of another." That is, in the Church of Christ, wherein His Spirit dwells, making it one. Every falsehood, therefore, is an offence and grief to the Spirit, and mars the unity of the Church. Schism, which is occasioned by falsehood, is particularly grievous to the Spirit of truth, love and unity. On the same principle, our union with our brethren in one body, depends the precept against stealing. The motive for labor, "That he may have to give to him that needeth," is given in the same spirit, and is highly characteristic of Gospel morality. It is remarkable that nearly all the sins which are specified here, are offences against our neighbour. Christianity is a system of humanity as well as godliness, and the humanity is based upon the godliness. When David had committed against Uriah the greatest injuries which man can do to man—being brought to repentance, he was compelled to confess thus before God: "Against thee, thee, only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." So here, these offences against our neighbour are represented as grievous to the Spirit of God, who makes human nature the object of His especial love. God's kind and tender-hearted forgiveness of us in Christ,



is set forth as the grand reason why we should be kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving towards one another.

Again, brethren, observe that our sins grieve the Spirit, not only because they are contrary to His nature, but by reason of *our ingratitude*. He is ever striving with us for our salvation. He has on His side done all hitherto that has been necessary to secure it, and He is ready to do the rest. It was by this "Eternal Spirit that Christ offered Himself without spot to God." The same Spirit inspired the messengers by whom the word was at first delivered. This Spirit is still present in the midst of the Church, and still strives to instruct us and lead us in the right way. To resist Him, then, is great and horrible ingratitude, from which may God preserve us !

Our sins grieve the Spirit by *their folly, by their tendency to ruin us*. It is His aim to save us. If we thwart Him, we shall have ourselves to thank for our destruction. All His suggestions tend the other way. *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil way ; for why will ye die ?* His pleasure is our salvation, and our destruction grieves Him in proportion. If then, by your sins, you perish, it will be your own doing. You will have perversely resisted the Spirit's long-suffering love. How awful are the words of St. Stephen : *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*. It will be no insignificant ingredient in the sufferings of the lost, to remember the strivings of the patient Spirit while their trial lasted ; that for their own obstinacy, they died not in the Lord, but their worthless carcasses fell in the wilderness ; that their stubbornness provoked at last the wrathful oath, *They shall not enter into my rest* ; and that their ruin itself grieved the Spirit, even when in judgment He departed from them, leaving them to perish.

Beware, then, of grieving the Spirit, *on account of the heinousness of the crime*. Well may we tremble at the thought of the awful power we hold ; at the possibility, to say the least, that we have already misused it, and have disturbed with grief the Holy Spirit of God ! If we have any reverence for

God, any sense of His sacred Majesty, any dread of incurring most fearful guilt—O brethren ! let us be on our guard for the future.

Grieve not the Spirit, *because He is the Spirit of love*. Have we not all felt that the conduct of the prodigal son in the parable was not more foolish than it was mean and selfish ? He thought not of the dishonor he put on his parent, when he prematurely claimed his *portion of goods*, nor of the grief his vices would occasion when he was *wasting his substance in riotous living*. He was seeking only his own gratification. Now, if an earthly father grieves over his lost child, how much more the Heavenly ! Much greater than the mean selfishness of the prodigal son is ours, when we grieve the holy and loving Spirit of God, *whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption*.

Grieve Him not, *lest He depart from you*. The Israelites in the wilderness rebelled and vexed God's Holy Spirit : *therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them*. (Is. lxiii. 10.) If He should finally depart—all the resources of His long-suffering, exhausted by our resistance, and His yearning to save changed to indignation—far worse will be our condition, and more tremendous our punishment, than if He had never abode with us at all, than if our brows had never felt the washing of His font, nor our foreheads received His mark. O let us listen to God's most kind but awful warning ! *To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts ; as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness ; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation and said ; It is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known my ways ; unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.*

"Wherefore if any man thinketh he standeth, let him take heed lest he fall." "Let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear," "giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure."

Once more, brethren, I beseech you by God's inestimable love in the sending of His Son, "for the Lord Jesus Christ's

sake, *for the love of the Spirit*," and by your own eternal well-being—by the wisest, the most sacred and the tenderest reasons which can influence the human being, that you grieve not the Holy Spirit, *whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*. *But who can tell how oft he offendeth?* Watchfulness is needful—watchfulness of ourselves, to repress every vain and wicked movement; watchfulness against temptation, lest the enemy enter at some unguarded post; watchfulness of the Spirit, that we may be ready for His every suggestion, wait upon Him with lowly dependence, open our hearts to His influence, follow His leading, and "stir up the gift of God which is in us." (2 Tim. i. 6).

It is a cheering and joyful thought, that if the Spirit is grieved by our sin, He is likewise pleased by our obedience. As the sculptor sees with delight feature after feature, limb after limb, rising into shape, in significance and beauty, under the skilful chisel, so the Spirit rejoices over His works with a Divine joy. When they were finished, He pronounced them *very good*. The work of the Creator Spirit on our mind, will, and affections, is nobler than the other, and the renewed man rejoices Him more. As a father rejoices over the success, honor, and happiness of his dear son, so the Spirit will rejoice over every soul He brings to "glory, honor, and immortality." When Bezaleel and Aholiab in the desert, with the skill which God had given them, had accomplished the work of the tabernacle, according to God's commandment and the pattern which was showed in the mount, Moses blessed them in the name of God. Their work was pleasing in His sight; He approved of it as a dwelling, and His glory filled the tabernacle. So when the temple of the Church, which, under the Spirit's inspiration and direction, is now a-building in secret, shall at last be uncovered, God's glory shall take up therein an everlasting abode, and the Spirit will rejoice in His work. May we, brethren, share in the gladness of that day! May it be ours thus to please the Spirit! May His seal, Christ's mark upon us, never be effaced; but, being carefully guarded, become ever more evident unto the day of redemption!

"So when at last our weary days  
Are well-nigh wasted here,  
And we can trace Thy wond'rous ways  
In distance calm and clear,

"When in Thy love, and Israel's sin,  
We read our story true,  
We may not—all too late—begin  
To wish our hopes were new;

"Long-loved, long-tried, long-spared as they,  
Unlike in this alone,  
That, by Thy grace, our hearts shall stay  
For evermore Thine own."

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### STRENGTH AND STILLNESS.

"Their strength is to sit still."—  
Isa. xxx. 7.

THE context reveals two things. First: *A great national danger.* The Jewish people now stood in terror of having their country invaded, and their city destroyed by Sennacherib the king of Assyria. It was an hour of terrible anxiety to the nation. The national firmament was black with threatening clouds. Secondly: *A great national sin.* To meet the danger, to ward off the threatened blow, instead of looking for help to the God of nations, they sought for an alliance with Egypt. They trusted to an arm of flesh, rather than in the Almighty God. Isaiah,

the holy prophet, is missioned to lift his earnest protest against this iniquity. "Woe to the rebellious children," &c. And in the text he tells them wherein their strength lay. It was in *sitting still*, calmly relying on the promises of God.

Wherein is the truth of the statement, that man's strength is in *sitting still*? or, rather, what is meant by *sitting still*? We answer at once, that it is not the *stillness* of INDOLENCE. Indolence is weakness—is ruin. Physical indolence, is physical ruin; intellectual indolence, is intellectual ruin; moral indolence, is moral ruin. Activity is the condition of strength. Industry is essential to progress in all that is great and

happy. What, then, is the stillness? *It is the stillness of unbounded trust in God.*

I. STILLNESS OF CONFIDENCE IN RELATION TO GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PROVISION IS "STRENGTH." The busying ourselves in efforts to commend ourselves to the Divine favor, to secure our acceptance with our Maker, is weakness. The provision for this has been made. The sacrifice of Christ is all-sufficient. By *one* sacrifice He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Be still, in relation to this, and feel that here you have nothing to do.

II. STILLNESS OF CONFIDENCE IN RELATION TO YOUR FUTURE HISTORY IS "STRENGTH." Do not busy yourselves about what will occur to you or your children in the future. Leave your future to the management of that paternal Providence, which clothes the lilies of the field, and feeds the fowls of heaven. "Take no thought for the morrow," &c. Sit still in relation to the future, and sing, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," &c.

III. STILLNESS OF CONFIDENCE IN RELATION TO PRESENT PROVIDENTIAL TRIALS IS "STRENGTH." The Israelites, with piled mountains on each

side of them, the sea rolling before them, and Pharaoh and his host approaching them, were exhorted by their leader to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Peter slept between two soldiers; and Paul said, "none of these things move me."

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#### ELIJAH: THOUGHTS ON LIFE.

"And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."—1 Kings xix. 8.

THE context presents Elijah to us in three aspects. (1) In the greatest despondency. Alarmed at the threat of Jezebel, he goes into the wilderness, and there, sinking into the utmost dejection of spirit, he sits down under a juniper tree and entreats the Almighty to take away his life (verse 4). Here is one of the most towering spirits in the lowest valley of despondency, one of the most daring natures cowering with the profoundest dread. To what reactions of soul are we subject while here! Great natures are liable to terrible rebounds. Here we have Elijah (2) Twice fed by a celestial messenger (verses 5—7). Angels are ministers to the good. "He will give

his angels charge concerning thee," &c. Here we have Elijah (3) Miraculously sustained. "He went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights," &c.

This incident suggests three things.

I. AN UNDESIRABLE POSSIBILITY IN HUMAN LIFE. The fact that a man lived forty days and forty nights without food, certainly impresses us with the possibility of his being kept in existence without food for ever. The possibility is obvious. But such a state would clearly be very *undesirable*. Were men to continue here without food, a *disastrous inactivity* would ensue. Want of food keeps the world in action, keeps the limbs and faculties of men going. What would life be without action? a weak and worthless thing.

This incident suggests—

II. THE SUPPORTING ELEMENT OF ALL LIFE. What is it that kept Elijah alive without food? The Will of God, nothing else; and this is that which supports all created existences every moment. "Man cannot live by bread alone." God's *will* can starve men with bread and sustain them without it. It is He, not material substances, not food, that sustains life. He

may do it with means, or without means, according to His pleasure. Let us not trust in means or secondary causes, but in Him who is the "Fountain of Life."

This incident suggests—

III. THE DIVINE CARE OF A GODLY LIFE. Elijah, notwithstanding his imperfections, was a true man, and a faithful servant of the Most High; and his Great Master watches over him, takes care of him in the wilderness. That God takes care of His people *individually* is (1) Accordant with reason. (2) Taught by Scripture. (3) Attested by the experience of the good.

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#### THE GOSPEL: ITS PREACHERS, HEARERS, AND REJECTORS.

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you."—Gal. iii. 1.

This text presents three subjects for thought.

I. THE WORK OF GOSPEL MINISTERS. What is their work? To present Christ crucified to men. "Christ crucified," or the "Cross of Christ," are phrases which, in Paul's writings, stand for the whole Gospel of God. Hence, he says, "We preach Christ

crucified." And again, "I am determined to know nothing among you, save Christ and him crucified." And again, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Why should this subject be graphically presented before the eyes of men? First: *It is the subject essential to rouse the religious thoughts of men.* Religious thought is essential to salvation. There is no subject within the whole range of human knowledge that can rouse this rightly, but the Crucifixion of Christ. With this subject Peter startled the minds of thousands, on the day of Pentecost. The *extraordinariness* of the subject and the *relative* importance of the subject, give it a soul-rousing force. Secondly: *It is a subject essential to generate religious feelings in man.* It awakens (1) Deep penitence for sin. (2) Supreme concern for the soul. (3) A solemn dread of wrong. Thirdly: *It is a subject essential to meet the religious wants of men.* Man wants (1) Forgiveness of sin. (2) Purity of soul. The cross of Christ provides these. This text presents—

II. THE DUTY OF GOSPEL HEARERS. What is their duty? "To obey the truth." The truth is preached not for mere speculation, or polemic dis-

cussion, but to be *obeyed*. (1) Its provisions are to be accepted as the only means of salvation. (2) Its doctrines are to be accepted as the infallible test of all truth. (3) Its precepts are to be followed as the sovereign rule of all action. We are to *obey* the truth, follow it whithersoever it may lead: to poverty, persecution, martyrdom, &c. This text presents—

III. THE FOLLY OF GOSPEL REJECTORS. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you," &c. First: *The folly of rejecting the Gospel is most infatuated.* "Who hath bewitched you?" The word translated "bewitched," here means, to enchant, to fascinate, to delude by magical charms, &c. The folly was not the mere native stupidity of the individual mind, but it was to a great extent the result of the deluding influence exerted on them by some wicked spirits. "Who hath bewitched you?" Who hath made you such fools as to reject the highest good? It is suggested—Secondly: *That the folly of rejecting the Gospel is most lamentable.* "O foolish Galatians." There was a wail of sad emotion in these words, "O foolish Galatians!" The great apostle knew the terrible consequences involved in the rejection of the Gospel.

SATAN, PETER, AND CHRIST.

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."—Luke xxii. 31, 32.

WE shall look at this remarkable statement of Christ as presenting the good man to us in two aspects.

I. AS THE OBJECT OF SATANIC DESIRE. "Satan hath desired to have you." "*Hath desired.*" The verb means, "hath required you." There is, perhaps, an allusion to Job's temptation. (Job ii. 6.) Still, as *requiring* implies *desire*, we may hold to the word in our remarks. Observe—First: *Satan is the subject of desire.* He is not a being of mere intellect, he has heart, and in his heart there are desires. His desires are *malevolent and insatiable.* Observe—Secondly: *Satan's desire has respect to individual men.* "*You.*" The pronoun is plural, and refers not merely to Peter, but to all the disciples. He does not overlook the individual in the millions; he is concerned with each spirit; he has a desire concerning each. Observe—Thirdly: *Satan's desire has respect to individual men who have become the disciples of Christ.* Satan desired to have them—Christ's disciples—as his servants and his

victims. He is more busy, perhaps, with the good here, than he is with the evil. His object is to thwart the purposes of mercy in relation to them, and to bring them back into his own dark empire. This statement of Christ presents the good man to us—

II. AS THE OBJECT OF CHRIST'S CARE. "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you," &c. Observe—First: *Christ knows the heart of Satan.* He knew the particular desire of the arch enemy. Christ knows the devil thoroughly—knows his every thought and feeling, sounds the deepest depths of his nature, knows his history from beginning to end. Observe—Secondly: *Christ warns his people against Satan.* He does this now with Peter. He knew Satan's desire and He makes Peter acquainted with it. He knows the devil's intent, and He sounds the note of warning. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Observe—Thirdly: *Christ invokes Heaven to thwart Satan.* "I have prayed for thee." For thee, Peter, especially. Christ's intercession is against the devil. What does He pray for? Not that the devil may be annihilated; not against his *sifting Peter as wheat*; testing him well; but that the faith of His people fail not.



The language implies—(1) That the effort of His people is required for the resistance of the devil. He is their enemy, and they must fight him. Moral battles cannot be fought for us. (2) That faith is essential to successful resistance. "Thy faith fail not." Faith in the true, the right, the Divine, in God Himself. Faith is the power. (3) That the sufficiency of this faith requires the assistance of God. Hence Christ prays that Peter's faith fail not. Observe—Fourthly : *Christ sets His disciples to work against Satan.* "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

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GOD'S VOICE TO HUMANITY.

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."—Amos iv. 12.

SINCE the fall of man in Eden, God's voice has been heard calling after man to turn from his evil ways and live. His voice was addressed to Adam, to the antediluvians, and oftentimes to the chosen people, the Israelites; and the words of the text were addressed to them. But at present we use the words to indicate God's voice to humanity. We infer—

I. THAT THERE IS A PERIOD TO DAWN UPON MANKIND WHEN THEY SHALL COME TO A PARTICULAR CONTACT WITH

God. "To meet thy God." When we survey the works of nature, we come to a close contact with God. He is the Author of nature. When we ponder the mysterious system of providence, we meet God. He is the ruler of that great and complicate system. And when we read the Bible, the ideas of the Infinite, our spirits come in contact with the Living One of Israel—the Fountain of all life and joy. But the text leads us on to a period when humanity shall face Him, and stand before His tribunal. This period—First : *Is certain.* Nature teaches the fact. Nature moves on gradually towards her destiny. The universe, with all its wonders and beauty, is marching on towards dissolution. Conscience indicates the same truth; but revelation verifies the fact. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." "God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world." This period—Secondly : *Is uncertain as to its time.* God has not revealed the time of His coming. No finite being has been privileged with the knowledge of the exact period of His coming. He will come as the thief in the night—suddenly, unexpectedly, and with glory ineffable. This period—Thirdly : *Is the great-*

*est of all periods of importance.* Then the actions of life will be brought to the test ; then the moral character of all men will be seen in the light of eternity ; then the destiny of humanity will be determined ; then a separation will take place between the righteous and the unrighteous, and this separation will place the righteous in a state of honor, the unrighteous in a state of utter degradation. The righteous will be happy, his union with Christ will raise him to honor and glory ; whilst the unrighteous will be banished from His sight, and go to everlasting punishment.

II. THAT THIS PERIOD WHICH IS TO DAWN UPON MANKIND REQUIRES PREPARATION ON MAN'S PART. "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." This fact teaches—First: *That man in his natural state is not in a condition fit to meet God.* Man is sinful ; God is holy. Sin has unfitted man for a personal communion with God. Secondly: *That man is in a state of possibility to prepare.* God's commands always imply possibility. There is a hope for man's restoration. The death of Christ has removed the obstacles which were in man's way to return to God, and those which were in God's way to

show mercy to the sinner. The salvation of humanity is possible. Thirdly: *That man's agency is necessary to his preparation.* Man must use the means given him by God for his preparation. God has done for man what he could not do for himself ; but what he could do, God has left him to do it. Man must cultivate his moral nature, train his faculties, and apply the means of sanctification.

III. THAT GOD FEELS DEEP INTEREST IN THE WORLD'S PREPARATION. "Prepare to meet thy God." God desires the salvation of the world. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) He wills that the world may be saved. First: *From what He has done for humanity.* He has formed a plan to redeem man, through the death of His Son. Secondly: *From what He is doing in man.* He reveals His Son in us. He is working in us through His Spirit. Thirdly: *From what He has promised to do for us in future,* namely, to glorify us, and raise us to everlasting enjoyment.

May we give due attention to His voice ! Attention to God's voice will secure our everlasting happiness.

Llandilo. J. O. GRIFFITHS.

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### CONFLICTING THEORIES OF THE ATONEMENT.

When a truth of religion which was evidently designed to be the centre and support of our spiritual life, the daily bread of our souls, is yet found to be, to really earnest and devout persons, rather a source of perplexity, and is tacitly laid aside as something which it is painful to think of—it may well excite the inquiry whether we have indeed got hold of the truth which was meant for us, or not rather of some misconception of it. It is this state of things which has led thoughtful Christian teachers in our own day to examine afresh the doctrine of the Atonement.

That "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," is everywhere assumed as a fact throughout the New Testament. To quote passages in proof of it would be idle, since the whole fabric of the Gospel rests upon it; but if we look for answers to the questions which men have since raised as to *why* He thus died?—in what *sense*? and though we may find materials from which a connected theory may be formed, we shall not find any distinct and orderly development of that theory in the Apostolic writings. Systematic divinity has been a growth, as it was a want, of aftertimes.

The theory of Atonement, which had possession of the Church at the time of the Reformation, and which, with some modifications, has prevailed ever since, was that of *substitution*. Christ was viewed as the *substitute* of the sinner, enduring *in his stead* the punishment due to him, and without the exaction of which it was held God could not be just in pardoning him. This theory, carried out to its

results, involved the doctrine of *redemption of the elect only*. The theory, as modified in later times and by modern writers, avoids the harshness of saying, as the older Calvinists did, that Christ actually suffered the punishment due to the sinner, *including the wrath of God*, and is content with saying that He suffered what, considering the infinite dignity of the sufferer, was *sufficient* to justify God in extending pardon to man. But both theories are alike in this, that they view the essence of the Atonement to consist in the endurance of *penal* sufferings, and also that they alike regard the work as complete, irrespective of any participation on the part of the sinner.

Against both these theories there have arisen of late years many murmurs of the understanding and heart. There has been an "offence of the cross," which did not spring from pride, from worldliness, or, as has been sometimes imputed to it, from slight views of sin.

The removal of this "offence" has been attempted by a *third* view; that which makes the essence of the atonement to consist not in the *endurance of penal sufferings*, but in the *perfect exhibition of self-sacrificing love in that endurance*, this being accepted by God as a compensation for man's sin. This view was adopted by the present writer, at a time when light first began to emerge from the darkness which had till then overhung the subject, and it is this which is enunciated in a tale published some years ago.\* But this view, though having much to commend it as an escape from the earlier theories, is

\* "The Youth and Womanhood of Helen Tyrrel."

by no means commensurate with the language of Scripture, and falls far short of the depth of the subject.

There is another view which may be taken.

If we carefully study the Epistles of St. Paul, we shall see that the great idea which pervades his mind when speaking of redemption, is that of Christ as the Head of Humanity—of the Church indeed most prominently—but of the Church as the first-fruits of Humanity. Thus he speaks of Christ as the “last Adam” (1 Cor. xv. 45), as being the “Head of the body, the Church, the beginning, the first-born from the dead,” &c. (Col. i. 18). And being the Head of Humanity, He also represents it. By the obedience of one, many are made righteous. What He does is predicated of His members also (Rom. v. 19). They die with Him (Rom. vi. 3—11; 2 Cor. xiv. 15). They are raised with Him (2 Cor. xv. 12—20). They sit with Him in heavenly places (Ephes. ii. 6). They are created in Him unto good works. In short, they are *in* Him. Seeing then this close connexion between the redeemed and Christ, a connexion not arbitrary and technical, but grounded on His relation to humanity, as the Son of Man, the *true, perfect man*, we are surely justified in looking upon Christ as having acted in the work of redemption as man’s *Representative*. Being true and perfect man, our Brother according to the flesh, He came by His Father’s will to recover His lost brethren. He came into this world “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” lived a human life, gained a human experience, and then with a perfect knowledge of what man is, what his sin was, what his capacity for good is, what are his trials and temptations; with a perfect knowledge also of His Father, of His claims, of His justice, the greatness

of His love, and His desire for the salvation of the fallen—having thus been made “perfect,” fitted for His work, He stood up to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

And now we have to see what the nature of that reconciliation was—what was the *essence* of the atonement offered. To judge rightly of this, we must recollect to whom it was to be offered. To a *Father*—not simply to a governor or sovereign, intent chiefly upon the security of his dominion and the vindication of his law—but to a *Father* who could be fully satisfied by nothing but the reclaiming of His children from their revolt, and their full reinstatement in their inheritance.

Now let us consider what is the first and most important element in moral restoration. Is it not a frank and full confession of sin? It is true that the deepest repentance cannot undo the past: yet it does undo it in the *heart* and *will* of the offender. Do we not feel that this is a more true reparation of evil than any punishment—that it is the only thing which even approaches to the healing of the soul? And does not God recognise this? “And David said unto Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord;’ and Nathan said unto David, ‘The Lord also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die.’” “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.” “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee,”—“Bring forth the best robe and put it on him.”

But it may be said that repentance does not always prevent our suffering the consequences of our sin, as may be seen in David’s case. No; it does not; and a humble submission to such chastisement as is appointed for us, is at once a test and expression of true repentance.

Mr. Campbell, in his deeply-interesting work on the "Nature of the Atonement,"\* thus writes respecting the worth of repentance:—

"That due repentance for sin, could such repentance indeed be, would expiate guilt, there is a strong testimony in the human heart, and so the first attempt at peace with God is an attempt at repentance—which attempt, indeed, becomes less and less hopeful, the longer, and the more earnestly and honestly it is persevered in,—but this, not because it comes to be felt that a true repentance would be rejected even if attained, but because its attainment is despaired of,—all attempts at it being found, when taken to the Divine light, and honestly judged in the sight of God, to be mere selfish attempts at something that promises safety,—not evil, indeed, in so far as they are instinctive efforts of self-preservation, but having nothing in them of the nature of a true repentance, or a godly sorrow for sin, or pure condemnation of it because of its own evil; nothing, in short, that is a judging sin, and a confessing it in true sympathy with the Divine judgment upon it. So that the words of Whitfield come to be deeply sympathized in,—'our repentance needeth to be repented of, and our very tears washed in the blood of Christ.'"—(p. 143.)

But Christ being perfectly "holy, harmless, and separate from sinners," and yet, bearing them on His heart as their Elder Brother, comes before His Father to confess their guilt, with a sense of it which only perfect holiness can give, and yet with a love and compassion, a hope and trust for them which nothing but Divine Love could feel; acknowledging the justice of

\* "The Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to the Remission of Sins and Eternal Life," by JOHN McLEOD CAMPBELL. Macmillan, 1856.

God's wrath against sin, taking voluntarily a share of the suffering due to sinful humanity, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; bearing their sins in His own body on the cross, and thus making, in the name of His brethren and on their behalf, a full reparation for the dishonor done to God.

"It was not in us," says Mr. Campbell, "so to confess our own sins; neither was there in us such knowledge of the heart of the Father. But if another could in this act for us,—if there might be a mediator, an intercessor—one at once sufficiently one with us, and yet sufficiently separated from our sin to feel in sinless humanity what our sinful humanity—could it in sinlessness look back on its sins—would feel of godly condemnation of them and sorrow for them, so confessing them before God;—one coming sufficiently near to our need of mercy to be able to plead for mercy for us according to that need, and at the same time, so abiding in the bosom of the Father, and in the light of His love and secret of His heart, as in interceding for us to take full and perfect advantage of all that is there that is on our side, and wills our salvation;—if the Son of God has, in the power of love, come into the capacity of such mediation in taking our nature and becoming our brother, and in that same power of love has been contented to suffer all that such mediation accomplished in suffering flesh implied"—[of which, as is elsewhere explained, the 'tasting death,' as the wages of sin, was a part]—"is not the suitableness and the acceptableness of the sacrifice of Christ, when His soul was made an offering for sin, what we can understand!"—(pp. 147, 148.)

Thus then we have arrived at the idea, that the essence of the atonement consisted in our Lord's

*expiatory confession of sin on our behalf* and in our name, His death being not a penalty endured as a substitute, but the perfected expression of such confession.

But the idea of a *Representative* implies the concurrence of those represented. An ambassador who represents his country pledges the concurrence and assent of that country to the measures he agrees upon. And thus Christ, representing the redeemed, pledged them to concur in the acknowledgment of guilt then made, the death to sin there realized, the sacrifice of self there offered up.

"What is thus offered on our behalf, is so offered by the Son, and so accepted by the Father, entirely with the prospective purpose that it is to be reproduced in us. The expiatory confession of sins which we have been contemplating, is to be shared in by ourselves; to accept it on our behalf, was to accept it as that mind in relation to sin in the fellowship of which we are to come to God."—CAMPBELL, p. 176.

And each one who comes to God through Christ is thus of one mind with Him. "Know ye not," says St. Paul, "that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?"—pledged to a reproduction in heart and life of the truths embodied in that act, and to a continual offering up of those spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable unto God as the carrying on of the one great sacrifice of Christ—the yielding themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead. Thus the work begun on the cross will only be fully accomplished in our *final redemption*, at once *complete in itself* like the Incarnation, and *incomplete* till the restitution of all things.

This reproduction of the mind of Christ in the redeemed is the special work of the Holy Spirit,

who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to us, leading us to see all things in the light in which Christ saw them, to condemn sin wherever it exists, and most of all in ourselves, to trust in God as a Father, and to love our fellow-men as brethren. On this part of the subject Mr. Campbell writes:—

"These elements of our Lord's consciousness, as the rays of the light of the life that was in Him, have that relation to us and to our state, that, shining in us in faith, they necessarily reproduce themselves in us—that is, according to the measure of our faith; man and God, sin and holiness, becoming to us in the light of Christ, what that light reveals them to be, and the confession of sin and the choice of holiness, self-despair, and trust in God, springing up in us; a confession of sin in unison with Christ's confession of our sins, a trust in God quickened by the faith of His trust in the Father on our behalf, and laying hold on that in the Father's heart on which His intercession laid hold. The atonement thus, through faith, reproduces its own elements in us, we being raised to the fellowship of that to which Christ descended in working out our salvation. 'We are crucified with Christ' in actual consciousness, as we were in the death of Christ for us in the counsel and grace of the Father. 'Nevertheless we live; yet not we, but Christ liveth in us.'"—(pp. 320, 321.)

Nor did Christ's representation of us close with the work of expiation. He represents us still in heaven as our great High Priest, offering up that sacrifice of righteousness, that giving to God what is His own, to which the sacrifice of atonement was the fitting introduction.

In this also we must respond to Him, and thus our Church teaches

us, having had communion with the Lord in the offering of His Body and Blood, to "offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice" to our Father in heaven.

We may venture to say in conclusion, that whatever may be the measure of our insight into these great truths, and its clearness will vary in minds of different texture, and in different stages of religious development, we practically understand the atonement just so far

as it brings us to God—to a true repentance for sin—a yielding up of ourselves to Christ as our Lord and Saviour—a joyful recognition of God as our Father, and a return of our spirits to their true home in Him.

Wir Christus tausendmal zu Bethlehem  
geboren,  
Und nicht in Dir, Du bist doch ewiglich  
verloren.

(Were Christ a thousand times in  
Bethle'm born,  
And not in thee: thy lot were still  
forlorn.)

*The Author of 'Brampton Rectory.'*

## Theological Notes and Queries.

### OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

#### THE SIN UNTO DEATH.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 14, p. 236. "The sin not unto death," may designate any but that which is "unto death." According to most interpreters, the latter is a sin which is accompanied with hardness, impenitence, malice, obstinacy, and incorrigibility. Although, strictly speaking, nothing is impossible to Almighty grace, yet the malice of the sinner may present such an obstacle to the Divine mercy as is morally insurmountable. Pardon is promised to repentance; but, in the case supposed, there is no repentance. The sin against the Holy Ghost is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; and there is much in common between that sin and a sin which has the character contemplated here. We do not think that the 18th verse is to be taken with mathematical strictness. It expresses the general truth, that sin is contrary to the new and better nature of the regenerate man; and that this life within, if justly dealt with, is sufficient to resist the assaults of evil.

#### THE FUTURE DWELLING OF THE BLESSED.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 15, p. 236. Wherever that abode may be, it will owe its character to the work of Christ, and thus may be said to have been "prepared" by Him.

#### THE PROBATION OF ANGELS.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 16, p. 236. We do not know that Scripture teaches aught, expressly, concerning the probation of angels; neither do we think that St. Jude, if he had not meant angels, would have mentioned them.

#### HOPE CONCERNING THE DEAD.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 17, p. 236. Nothing, of course, would more frightfully enhance the pain of bereavement, than the belief that the lost one had perished for ever. Whether the hope be well-grounded or not, survivors naturally shrink from any other thought than that their departed friend is in peace.

## THE USE OF MIRACLES.

**REPLICANT.** In answer to **QUERIST** No. 18, p. 236. In itself, the maintenance of order in universal nature is more glorious than a miracle; but it seems that the use of a miracle is dependent on the increased nearness and directness of manifestation which it involves. We cannot agree with you in attributing a vast superiority to moderns, over those in whose sight our Lord's miracles were wrought; neither can we admit that we are left without miracles in this age. Every true revolution of the moral character is a miracle, and a greater one than the change of water into wine, or even the resurrection of a corpse.

*Queries to be answered.*

19.—Is the circumstance of a man having—through the Divine will—spoken by inspiration, any indication whatever of his being less frail, less fallible than the rest of mankind? David, Jonah, and others were the mediums through which God's purposes were declared, and they were transgressors. After the power of working miracles had been conferred by

Christ upon the apostles, two of them sinned.—F.R.G.S.

20.—In Jude we read:—"The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Can we infer from this, that the judgment day of man will also be that of fallen angels? If so, may not the hell of man be also that of the condemned angelic host?

P. H.

21.—In a "Germ of Thought" on the *Moral Battle*, by F. H., a passage occurs as follows:—"By baptism we were enlisted as soldiers of Christ, to fight under His banner, with His armor." In what sense can a "child" be clothed with spiritual armor?—JUNIOR.

22.—When Nebuchadnezzar had thrown the three men into the fiery furnace, he said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." How was the king enabled to say this, considering he was an idolater? Although he may have heard of the true God, he doubtless had never heard of Christ. Was it a special revelation to Nebuchadnezzar?—P. M. H.

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

**THE LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.** Translated from the German of J. P. LANGE, D. D. Edited, with Additional Notes, by REV. MARCUS DODS, A.M. In Six Volumes. Vols. I., II., III. London: Hamilton & Co.

THE biography of Christ is not only the basis and substance of a *Christian theology*, but the life and light of the world. We can never



have too much of this life. Every incident connected with His history is a quickening ray for souls. We hail, therefore, every truthfully-written story of His life, every attempt to reproduce His wonderful individuality amongst men. Portraits of the Christ of theology and the Christ of Churches abound; and they are often more hideous than lovely. The Christ of the evangelist—the Christ of God—radiating with truth and overflowing with love, is what the ungodly world requires. Without disparaging such works on the subject as those of Dörner, Hase, Ewald, Andrews, Ellicott, and others, we regard Dr. Lange's as equal to the best, superior to some, and accomplishing some things which others have omitted. The immediate object of this masterly production is to meet and refute those views of the life of our Lord which a negative criticism has set into wide circulation in our own country and on the continent, and to substitute that authentic and consistent history which a thoroughly scientific criticism deduces from the evangelists. The following remarks of the author on criticism will indicate to our readers the philosophic astuteness of his intellect, and the spirit with which he prosecutes his great undertaking:—"The relation of the Gospel history to that criticism which is antagonistic to it, is already happily and ecclesiastically decided. It is, however, the task of theology to explain the same scientifically; and the author will feel happy if he shall in anywise have contributed to its accomplishment. It may here, however, be once for all remarked, that too sharp a distinction cannot be made between criticism in a Christian sense, and the anti-Christian nuisance which now assumes that name. Christianity is, in its absolute trustworthiness, and infinite depth of spiritual light and vigor, identical with true criticism. Never let us attribute to a sincere and candid testing of the Gospels, and of Holy Scripture in general, the evils appertaining to criticism falsely so called. Even the most certain facts of faith are not, in the fullest sense, our own possession, till the sharpest, most vigilant, and most practised spiritual intellect has freely admitted and appropriated them. If man is to be fully blessed, his understanding—no less than his other powers—must be fully satisfied." Our readers will, of course, endeavor to possess this admirable work, of which we shall again remind them when the remaining three volumes come into our hands.

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AN EXPOSITION OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL. Delivered in several Lectures in London. By W. GREENHILL, M.A. Revised and Corrected by JAMES SHERMAN. London: James Nisbet & Co.

WE owe an apology to the enterprising publisher of this work, for not directing the attention of our readers to it long before this. Unfortunately, it got placed on the shelves of the library, and not on the editorial table, so that it was regarded rather as an old friend than as a visitor challenging our confidence.

*The author of this work, though the child of past centuries, is not*

*gotten*. He thought thoughts that have borne his name down through  
s, and made his memory fragrant to modern men. This exposition  
his on *Ezekiel* was delivered as a long course of lectures in the  
y of London upwards of two hundred years ago. His plan of dealing  
h the book is at once scientific and modern. He seeks, by a critical  
mination, first to bring out the idea of the prophet; and then, by  
uments and illustrations, to work that idea into the reason and con-  
nce of his readers. His style, though much marked by the wordiness  
indelicacies of his times, is often clear, singularly arresting, and  
reasive. This work, which at one time could not be procured under  
pounds, is now, through Mr. Nicol, offered for so many shillings.

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THE PRACTICAL WORKS OF DAVID CLARKSON, B.D., Vol. I. London:  
James Nisbet & Co. Edinburgh; James Nicol.

THIS is another work of an old author, just issued by Mr. Nicol. Clarkson  
occupied a very high place amongst the divines of the Puritan school.  
He was a man of vigorous intellect, rich scholarship, and distinguished  
piety. Some of his sermons are worthy of the choicest place in  
miletic literature. With some of his theological views we have no  
sympathy whatever; in truth they are most repugnant to our nature.  
That man is constitutionally a sinner, and that the anger of God rests  
on him from the instant of his conception, are ideas revolting to our  
fundamental notions of God. Nevertheless, his works contain so much  
that is suited to suggest holy trains of thought and inspire devout senti-  
ments, that we rejoice in their republication.

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SERMONS PREACHED AT TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON. By the late REV.  
FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON, M.A. Fourth Series. London: Smith,  
Elder & Co.

THE *Homilist* was amongst the first, if not the first, of periodical reviews  
to call attention to the surpassing merits of Mr. Robertson as a preacher,  
and we are pleased to know that our readers, all over the world, have  
expressed their gratitude to us for giving such a recommendation of his  
sermons, as induced them to procure and peruse them. They are indeed  
wonderful productions, they read like the utterances of some supernal  
intelligence. In his discourses the sublimest things come to us without  
any labored effort; without any verbal criticism he makes the meaning  
plain from the text;—without any formal logic his utterances carry  
conviction. Without any rhetorical ornamenting, his periods charm the  
imagination;—without any sensationalizings, every sentence of his stirs  
the soul. He was one of those rare men to whom the Almighty  
gives the power of at once reaching and reflecting the things that God  
has put into His Bible, to meet the nature and the wants of man.  
Though the sermons in this volume are more fragmentary and

incomplete than those comprised in the preceding volumes, though they have been gathered from manuscripts never intended for publication, they undoubtedly wear the author's impress. His thoughts were not the weavings of a machine, but the efflorescence of life, and therefore were true to himself.

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**THE PASTOR'S VOICE.** By the late REV. GEORGE JEANS, M.A. With Introduction by REV. C. J. GOODHEART, M.A. London: William Macintosh.

THIS volume contains twenty-five sermons on important theological subjects. They are thoughtful, chaste, and practically evangelic. They are decidedly superior to the ordinary run of the so-called evangelical sermons. They are more manly in thought, and catholic in spirit. Alas! they are posthumous. The Church can but ill spare such preachers as Mr. Jeans. The short preface by his widow breathes the spirit of truth, and a sigh of sorrow.

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**THE FAMILY OF GOD.** By the Rev. EDWARD GARBETT, M.A. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co. These are seven discourses bearing on domestic piety; they are thoughtful, intelligent, and practical. Parents will do well to procure this little volume and study it. **WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE CONCERNING THE KINGDOM AND ADVENT OF CHRIST?** By W. P. LYON, B.A. London: Elliot Stock. This is a work which exposes the unscripturalness and absurdities of what is called pre-millennialism! a heresy into which some Christians of a Jewish type of thought have fallen in these days. The author conducts his argument with candor and ability. **PLEASANT HOURS WITH THE BIBLE AND ITS KEY.** London: Tract Society. We are informed that the Scripture Queries and Enigmas in this little volume have appeared in the "Sunday at Home," and, therefore, some of our readers may know something about them. For our own part, we do not think much either of the idea or its execution. **THE PEEP OF DAY.** London: Hatchard & Co. A work that has reached its one hundred and thirty-first thousand certainly needs no commendation. **MORAL HEROISM.** The Young Heroes of the Bible; or, Illustrations of the Power of Youthful Piety. In Three Lectures. By the REV. SAMUEL NEWTON. Newcastle: T. Bayley. Three Lectures, short but spirited, fresh with thought, and bounding with force. **LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE.** Seven Sermons by the REV. S. COWDY. London: Elliot Stock. Seven plain discourses, containing some racy things. **CHRISTIAN HOME-LIFE; A Book of Examples and Principles.** London: Religious Tract Society. The subject of this book is of all subjects the most important. Such a theme in the hand of a man of true genius and godliness, would have been wrought into a work of thrilling interest. This volume, were it not for the little anecdotes here and there interspersed, would be lamentably dull.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Pleasing God.

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"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."—1 Thessa. ii. 4.

**T**O a superficial and hasty reader of the epistles of St. Paul, it might seem as if he were actuated at different times by contrary principles, as if he were on some occasions supremely influenced by human judgments, and on others defiant of them. Now he seems anxious to please man, and then he cares not for pleasing man; now he conforms to custom, and then he departs from it, and sets it at nought. He exhorts Christians "to please their neighbours for their good." With respect to himself, he says, "Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." At other times he exclaims, "Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." He warns servants against rendering eye-service as men-pleasers; and in our text he declares that he speaks "not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." Now, these apparently contradictory statements are contradictory only in appearance, each finding its own explanation and justification in the circumstances in which it was

uttered. The principle which covers, and, in fact, reconciles both, may be thus compendiously enunciated :—"I strive to please all men whensoever I justly can ; but when I cannot please them justly, I care not to please them. To please God is my governing and inflexible purpose. When the pleasing of man comes fairly within the line of this purpose, and can be accomplished without deviation from it, I will please man ; but when it lies wide of it, or runs counter to it, then I will not strive to please man. If both results lie fairly before me, it will double my delight to know that I am giving pleasure both to God and man. The moment they diverge—as I cannot pursue both—I must pursue the highest and the best, and please Him whose will is done in heaven, and must be done on earth by all who are hoping to reach heaven."

The duty of one man to please another is one which not only arises out of the very constitution of humanity, and out of the demands of social existence, but is enjoined and consecrated by Christianity. Indeed, it is one of the highest obligations of life to give pleasure to those with whom we are brought into fellowship, whether occasional or permanent ; and to give pleasure, not only contingently and by chance, but by positive design and effort. By having it before us as a distinct aim, we counteract in great measure that centralizing selfishness which seeks its own gratification at whatever cost or hazard to the comfort and feelings of others ; and it is only as we desire to please others within the limits of truth and Christian manliness, that we can hope to be of service to them, and, especially, of spiritual service. The pleasing of others is the laying of lines of connexion between them and us ;—it is the bridging over of a chasm which otherwise might have been for ever impassable ;—it is like sunlight, and warms into verdant and fruitful friendship, seeds, which else would have remained unproductive. The impartation of pleasure is thus something more than a branch of good breeding and social courtesy, giving smooth and pleasant movements to wheels that are prone to be rusty, and hence jarring. It is a branch of moral and spiritual duty, which must be assiduously

cultivated by those who aspire to extensive usefulness. Accordingly, you will observe how necessarily useless—not to say how necessarily injurious—a man must be, who either does not take into his account the gratification of his fellow-men, or who, with the spirit of a sour cynic, delights in wounding them. Good and honest men must wound others often enough in this world without designing it, and with sorrow that it must be done; so that there is all the greater need for seeking to please them whenever truth and honor will permit us; and it is not only a pity or misfortune, it is a sin, when those who profess the name of Christ—be their calling in life what it may; be they parents, teachers, or preachers—make light of the feelings of others; when they carry around them an atmosphere which chills everyone that touches it, or bristle with a spiny covering which cannot fail to repel and exasperate. As a means of education, the pleasing of children within the limits of a *just* authority on the one hand, and confiding obedience on the other, is sternly indispensable in order to a healthy culture and growth. Man must be good in order to be happy; children must be happy in order to be good. The atmosphere around them must be fresh, bright, and sunny; and where this is not the case, it is no wonder if an unhappy child turns out an immoral man. The Sun of Righteousness has not only beams, but healing in them; and there is a healing power in the innocent pleasures among which children spend their early days. We have not, however, now to expand and illustrate the duty of pleasing our fellow-men, but rather to show that this is subordinate to another, and must ever be held as subordinate to the duty of pleasing God. This then is the truth we have to consider—that in all times, and in all relations of life, and in all conceivable circumstances, the supreme and controlling purpose of life should be, “not to *please* men, but *God*.”

And we would beg you to observe—that *the one is possible, the other is impossible*. You can please God—but man you cannot rely on pleasing. Yes, it is possible to *please* God, and this is one of the greatest and most consolatory thoughts.

by which the human mind can be visited. Man can *please* God—not only avoid grieving Him—not only so live as not to stir or rouse Him into anger, but so as to yield Him a distinct and positive satisfaction. The thought may amaze us and even tax our faith, when we reflect on the infinite greatness of God, and upon the boundless satisfaction which He derives from the depths of His own mysterious nature. And, indeed, it is not a little strange that He who fills eternity and infinity with His presence, whose power is irresistible, whose wisdom compasses all possible things, whose holiness burns with an ineffable and unendurable brightness, and whose happiness was illimitable before star shone or angel sang, can derive pleasure from ought that human lips can speak, or human hands can do. But with all the mystery which enshrouds the fact, a fact it is declared to be once and again in the oracles of truth. God can be pleased with man—has been pleased with him, not only before his fall, but since—not only once but oftentimes, and is ever accessible to any joy that even the weakest of his children can awaken in His bosom. He does not consent to be placed far away, in a cold and distant heaven, infinitely removed from our concerns, and looking, if at all, with an eye of supernal indifference on our affairs. While well aware that compared with Him we are of yesterday, and know nothing, and are crushed before the moth—as He did not think it beneath Him to create us, so He does not think it beneath Him to watch over us and to be pleased with us or displeased according to our conduct towards Him. Something analogous to the interest He takes in us, but infinitely below it in grandeur and mystery, is the interest which some illustrious statesman takes in the movements of his infant-child. It is a curious but pleasant sight to see a man who holds the helm of the commonwealth, and whose sagacity and eloquence fill the senate and the world with astonishment, playing, it may-be, with his child, and taking a positive delight in its stumbling efforts to walk, and in its stammering efforts to speak. Strange, you may say, that so great a man can take such pleasure in a little

—and so wise a man in an unlettered infant—and so  
 rent a man in the most inarticulate babbling. And yet,  
 we do not feel that the statesman becomes all the greater  
 in our esteem—do we not feel that he fills a larger sphere of  
 influence, when he can in the evening direct the complicated  
 affairs of the nation, and in the morning enter with the  
 simplest sympathy into the amusements of his boy? Even so  
 with God. With Him the difference is not so much  
 between the great and the little, (for the greatest is little  
 compared with Him,) but the difference is one of quality, the  
 good and the bad. All things pure and good and true, delight  
 Him, however insignificant they may seem; but the greatest  
 sin awakens His indignation unless it have in it the element  
 of genuine godliness.

Now, one circumstance which renders it possible for man  
 to please God, is, *that God has revealed to him His will*. He  
 has not left us to the uncertain limits of the material creation.  
 We are not confined to a mere deciphering, with doubt and  
 difficulty, of the hieroglyphics which fill earth and sky.

When we have been thus left, we know full well from the actual  
 history of mankind in those times and regions of the world in  
 which there has been no higher help, how hopelessly men  
 wandered from the true in religion, and the pure in  
 morals. Men never have succeeded in reading their way to  
 virtue, nor in making their way to virtue and godliness, under  
 the unaided light of nature. And from the beginning until

the present there has not been an instance in which a nation has  
 spontaneously and in its own strength risen to the knowledge  
 of the Divine character and the Divine will. The apostle  
 points to this fact a moral explanation when he says, “they  
 refused to retain God in their knowledge.” He denies not  
 them the faculties for such knowledge, but the desire for  
 God, however, has not stood upon His dignity in the  
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 world, and said—“If man cannot spell out my existence,  
 my character, and claims, from his own heart and from the world  
 in which he dwells, he must continue in ignorance until death  
 draws the curtain and he sees me *face to face*.” He has



graciously met our sinful condition and the darkness which that has thrown around us, and which has swathed us in a thicker than Egyptian gloom. Because the lights of nature were too feeble to penetrate and scatter it, He has enkindled the lights of grace. He first sent the prophets who spake in times past to the fathers, and in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son. He desired that man should *know His* will, and should *do* it; and hence He reveals it with such clearness that the wayfaring man, though a fool, *need not err*.

Would you know how you may please God? On two distinct occasions during our Saviour's life on earth, a voice from Heaven was heard, declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased—*hear him*." This was God's emphatic seal on the mission and ministry of Christ. It was the setting forth of Jesus as the Saviour of the world, and as its only Saviour. It assigns to Him the high and sacred position of test and criterion of our hearts in the sight of God. It seems to say:—"This, my beloved Son, will try you whether your will and mine are one; whether our affections can meet and blend on one common object. My heart rests on him, He is all that I desire; can you receive Him, can you rest on Him, is He all that you desire? If so, then you please me because you are pleased with Him in whom I am well pleased. We are made *one* in Christ. If you agree with me upon my Son in all He is, and in all He has come to teach, and be, and do, and suffer, you cannot disagree with me in aught that is important. He expresses all my will; He and I are one, and if you hear him you hear me."

Now, it is clear from this, that such as affect to be anxious to please God, and yet turn away from Christ, doubting or denying His mission, teaching, and death, are tried by this test and found wanting. The child which was set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel, has been set for their fall. The stone which the builders rejected, has been to them "a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence." Whenever there is a desire to please God, that desire at once responds to the touch of this Divine lodestone; and where

there is no response, the desire is wanting. And it is in vain that men even strive to please God, when they have turned away from Christ and trampled upon His blood. Love has been outraged in its highest expression; the heart of the Heavenly Father has been wounded in its tenderest part. The smile passes away at once from the face of God. He feels that He has been dishonored and rejected in the person of His own, and only Son, and all endeavors to please Him do but add insult to injury. Our praises and prayers he regards as a mockery; our gifts He disdains. We have rejected Him; He also rejects us. But when with a glad heart we receive Christ; when we enthrone Him in our affections; when we make Him Lord over conscience; when we bid our passions be quiet at His feet; when we embrace Him in all that He is to man as Prophet, Priest, and King; then does the joy of God in Christ embrace us in the swell and compass of its gladness, and He rejoices over us with singing. We become henceforth His sheep, and He guides, guards, and feeds us; we become His temple, and He dwells in us; we become His friends, and He walks with us; we become His children, and He makes us His heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ. And all that arises out of this faith in Christ, and union with Him, pleases God. As He is pleased with the engrafting, so is He with the growing, and the fruit-bearing—with our love, with our faith, with our patience, with our endeavors after holiness, with our benevolence, with our truthfulness, with every sincere aim and effort to commend ourselves unto Him, and to *every man's conscience in His sight*. As we read His word, and strive to understand all His will concerning us, and to do it, we seem to hear around us the heavenly voice:—"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

The will of God, therefore, is revealed—clearly, explicitly; and we know it, or may learn it. We know what we must do, and avoid, in order to please God. But what are you

to do in order to please man? Where has he revealed his will? If you make it your aim and guiding principle to please man, who is the man that you are about to make the god of your life? You are surrounded by tens of thousands. Whom are you about to select for this dangerous honor? Who is the sun around whom you are about to revolve in planetary subservience? I say, who is the *sun*; for it is clear enough that no man with even a spark of wisdom will ever dream of striving to please all men, and being a satellite to all. If you are a politician, and are seeking the suffrages of your fellow-citizens that you may represent them in the high senate of the land, you do not, surely, imagine that your political creed will please all? If you please some, you will grieve others; if some lift you up, others will thrust you down; if some emblazon your excellences, others will display your faults, and exaggerate them without conscience or scruple; if some admire you for your advanced principles, others will denounce you as a revolutionist; or if you are praised by one party for your moderation, another will censure you as a re-actionist, desiring to put back the shadow on the dial of the world's history; and if you strive so to trim, and clip, and shape your utterances that they may seem to mean all things generally, and nothing in particular, then it is certain that many, if not all, will suspect you as a man of no principle, and will treat you as such.

Or if a man be a preacher of the Gospel, and makes it his supreme aim to please not God, but man, and bends all his energies to this low end, with what certainty he must fail! He is striving to please not *one* but *many*, and these, frequently, men of all shades of theological faith, and of all degrees and variety of culture. Some love the dry, pure, unclouded light of truth, and would prefer religion put with all the rigor and coldness of mathematical formula, and with all the stringent sequence of a demonstration in Euclid. Others have a hatred of logic because they cannot comprehend it; they prefer being taken by storm suddenly, and without the parallels and

es of a regular, orderly siege. Some would have simple  
ing ; others truth, set off in all the colors of a brilliant  
ation. Some would have doctrine, and nothing else ;  
experimental religion, and nothing else ; others  
e, and nothing else. Now, it is clear that a man who  
it his aim to please all these classes and conditions of  
night as well strive to fly to all the points of the com-  
t one and the same moment ; and he will labor under  
ditional disadvantage, that if it be known or suspected  
is making it his ruling purpose to please men, each will  
himself entitled to be gratified as a matter of right.  
here it is known that his ruling purpose is to please  
ll will know that it is with him a light matter to be  
l of man's judgment, "because he that judgeth him is  
rd."

*It is impossible to please all men, it is almost as impossible  
se one.* For who is the *one* man whom it would be *right*  
sult in all matters, and whose gratification must be  
ed as a supreme end ? How wise he must be whose  
ent never errs ; how good he must be whose desires never  
what is evil ; how constant his purpose must be which  
changes nor swerves. Where is the man to be found  
om these qualities meet ? In God, you have them in  
tion, and hence He may and must be pleased. When once  
s given you to know His will, you may say :—"This is *His*  
ho is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, and who  
ever turn from it to the right hand or to the left. It  
e the same to-morrow as to-day. It is as firm as the  
nces of nature ; as invariable as rising and setting suns ;  
stant as gravitation ; as reliable as summer and winter,  
ime and harvest, day and night. I shall not *awake in*  
*orning* and find the will retracting its old commands, and  
g new and contradictory ones. Its tones and purport  
e the same to-morrow as to-day. No new light can break  
the Eternal Mind, leading Him to alter His thoughts or  
nge His will." But who is the man that fulfils these  
tions ? Choose the best, wisest, most constant man that

has ever crossed your path since you entered upon life, and has he been too wise to learn, too good to improve, too constant to change? Where is the man that has been able always to please himself, and that has not renounced many things as false which once he believed to be true, and embraced many things as true which once he believed to be false. Do we not all stand abruptly opposed to many of our former selves, uttering our *yea* against many *nays*, and our *nay* against many *yeas*? If you strive to please always, and in all given circumstances, any one man, you little know the shapes you will have to assume before you reach the end of life. You will be like a sailor, who, far away upon the mighty sea, should resolve to steer himself by the guidance of some cloud, which now changes its lustre, then its direction, then its shape, and afterwards, like an unsubstantial vapour, *vanisheth away*. But he that seeks to please God, has a definite, fixed pole-star before him, over which no cloud ever comes, which is always within sight; and, steering by this, he must come at length into the desired haven.

*As a further proof of the impossibility of pleasing man, I may adduce the consideration that God has failed to please him, perhaps more signally failed, than even man himself.* How frequently, for example, you find man expressing himself in the most free and unreserved manner upon God's government of the earth. There is scarcely a week rolls over our heads in which thousands do not take the licence to suggest that the weather might be considerably improved. With what an obstinate peevishness oftentimes you will hear men rail against the east wind, or the cold, or the heat, or the rain, or the drought; and at one and the same moment you will find men censuring the weather for opposite reasons. And yet it is God—no less, no other than God—that holds the winds in His fists, and the waters in the hollow of His hands, and whose ever-living and active will is expressed in every agency in nature. And does He not fail to please men by the aspect which His providence bears to them in their individual life? Do not many complain because they are not prosperous, and

many because they are not more so, and many because others are endowed with greater riches? And does He not fail to please us when He lays affliction upon our loins, and when He sends death into our homes, and takes from us our loved ones? And do we not then complain as if there were not justice in the Most High?

*And, chiefly, do you not see how He failed to please man, when He came in the likeness of man that He might redeem him, and purify him and fit him for heaven? Was He welcomed? He came to His own, but His own received Him not. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was taken, and with wicked hands was crucified and slain. If any one could be expected to receive a universal homage it was surely He who combined in one person all that was perfect in God and all that was perfect in man. Here, you might have said, is the perfection of beauty that will win all hearts. All kings will hasten to cast their crowns at His feet; all priests will feel that they must fill their censers with incense to Him, before they finally abdicate their functions for the One High Priest who shall have no successor; all prophets will feel that it becomes them to be silent in the presence of Him who is the Truth; all people will gather with adoring admiration around Him whose justice is without corruption, whose purity is without stain, whose tenderness surpasses that of woman, whose merciful mission has its tokens in opened eyes, unstopped ears, the cleansed lepers, the healed sick and the raised dead. Instead of this they seek to entangle Him in His talk, they go about to compass His destruction, they charge Him with complicity with the devil; they say, He hath a devil and is mad, and He that came to save the world is slain by the very world that He came to save. And if He, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, failed to please man, who is he that will undertake to achieve the wonder which was beyond Immanuel's power?*

*Another thought that occurs in further elucidation of our text, is, that by seeking to please men instead of God, or more*

*than God, men must doom the world to perpetual darkness and stationariness, or rather, as this is not possible, to sure regression and decay.* To whom does the world owe its progress in every department? Is it to men who have been so supremely anxious to please their fellows, that they have never given voice and wing to unwelcome truth? Did Noah cease to build the ark because he found that his neighbours were indignant at the protest he was thus rearing against their sins? Did Daniel cease to open his window and pray towards Jerusalem, because the act was offensive to Darius, and his court and people? Did the three Hebrew children bend a supple knee with the hosts of worshippers, that paid idolatrous homage to the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, because it was the fashion, and because, to say nothing of the fiery furnace, they would otherwise give serious umbrage to the king? Did John the Baptist set a seal upon his lips in the presence of Herod because it was not the manner of a courtier to upbraid the monarch with a gross and grievous sin, or did Paul leave Felix at ease to continue his unhallowed fellowship with Drusilla, and say nothing of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come? And, in later days, did Luther shrink from the work of the Reformation, because he foresaw that it would disturb the peace of Europe—if that could be called peace which was death, and tyranny, and suffocation of all the highest principles of man? Was he not plied by every consideration to abstain from the work of revolution? He was coaxed with sweet words, and threatened with fire, both the quenchable and the unquenchable; but he spake, and wrote, and worked, until the woman that had been drunk with the blood of the saints, trembled on her seven-hilled throne. The greatest teachers and benefactors of the world have been its greatest martyrs. Stationed by God upon loftier eminences than the rest of mankind, they have seen the truth before their brethren, and have dared to utter it; and as truth is generally unwelcome at first, the seers have been made sufferers too. For “which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?” But in the next generation,

or the next, the truth they uttered becomes the faith of the people, and then it is true still, as in the time of our Lord: "Your fathers slew the prophets, and ye build their sepulchres." The world has been chiefly indebted to men whose supreme desire has not been to inhale as incense the flattering breath of the present and transient generation, but to utter the thing that was true, and to do the thing that was right, believing that the time would come when God would give victory to the truth, and defend the right. And it somehow happens that those who have a single eye to the glory of God, and pursue it unswervingly, succeed in the long run in pleasing men, even more extensively than those whose chief aim it has been to live in the good opinion of their fellows. When men know that you are a man and not a sycophant, a loyal follower of what you believe to be Divine in principle and in practice, and not a mere time-server, playing such fantastic tricks before High Heaven as might make angels weep, they will know how to respect your honesty and fidelity to your own convictions, even when they differ from you. It is an inspired utterance, "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Oh! how true it is, and how blessed *is the truth that it is easier to please God than man*; for He will pity us in our failures when man will show no pity. God knows the hearts of His children. He sees oftentimes that their purpose is good, and that they strive hard to render Him some worthy service, but fail, and then weep in secret that they have sunk so far beneath their aim; and God comes to their side, not austere—not with a sneer, or a cold, fault-finding love—not to say, "Ah! this is poor, very poor; ambitious in design, but wretched in execution; fair in the beginning, but with a lame and impotent conclusion." Such are not *His* words. He comes with encouragement. He does not expect the noon ere yet the morning has fully dawned, nor does He expect the sun of our spiritual life to climb to its meridian without a cloud. He tells us to take heart; assures us that



He values our every desire to' please Him, and accept our service not according to that we have not, but according to that we have. He will not break the bruised reed: man would throw it into the fire; he will not quench the smoking flax: man would trample it beneath his feet. Man must have success, or he will brand you: with God it is enough to see your faithfulness. "*Well done*," cry men, when they see you achieve a victory. "*Well done*," says God, when you are a good and faithful servant. Oh! let us set the Lord always before us; let us strive to commend ourselves to Him, and so far as may be to every man's *conscience in His sight*. In every walk of life, in every act of life, let this be our steady, unswerving aim, and if there must be an epitaph which in one sentence is to gather up and express the spirit which has animated us, let it be this:—"He had this testimony that he pleased God."

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION TENTH.—Acts iii. 12—26.

"And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our

hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. Denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be set free unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in Jesus hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the limbs of you all. And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye have done as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before testified by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, have now been fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the people, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which shall hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. And all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as they have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, whom he hath sent, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."—Acts iii. 12—26.

TEXT:—*The Miracle at "The Beautiful Gate," a Fact, a Text, and an Epoch.*

(Continued from page 255.)

When we looked at this miracle as a *fact*, we proceed now—

To look at it as a **TEXT**. Peter, inspired with the consciousness of his mission as an apostle of the new religion, seized upon the miracle as a *text* for a Gospel discourse. It is a law of the human mind to look at all outward things through its dominant elements, and to subordinate all outward things to its dominant purposes. The apostles were full of thoughts pertaining to Christ, and they looked at the universe and all

passing events through this medium. In treating this miracle as a subject of discourse, he does three things :—He traces it to its true Author ;—he connects it with the name of Christ ;—he develops the Christian plan of restitution.

I. HE TRACES THE MIRACLE TO ITS TRUE AUTHOR. He does this—(1) Negatively. He disclaims for himself and his colleagues the authorship. “When Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this ? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk ?” The people were marvelling. That was natural, for it was a great wonder ; but they seemed to marvel not merely at the fact, but at the means by which they thought that fact was produced. They considered that these poor apostles did it by their “own power or holiness.” Peter at once seeks to correct the false impression, and to sweep the thought from their minds. This prompt disclaimer of the authorship of the miracle by the apostles, is a remarkable demonstration of their *honesty*. Had they taken the credit of this marvellous achievement, their social power would have become regnant at once ; the people would have gathered around them by millions, followed them as heroes, worshipped them as gods. To the ambitious instincts which they had within them, in common with all men, this might have been a temptation ; nor was there any difficulty in their obtaining universal credit for this work. The people seem at once to have ascribed the deed to them ; there was no difficulty in the way to this honor. The people believed that they were the authors of it, and they looked with devout wonder at them, so that Peter said, “*Why look ye so earnestly on us ?*” Every eye looked with mingled awe and amazement at them, and every heart trembled with a strange reverence in their presence. For the apostles therefore, under such circumstances, to disclaim at the outset the authorship of the miracle, is a proof of their honesty, a proof whose strength will increase in our estimate as we compare it with the ordinary conduct of mankind. But

in tracing the miracle to its Author, he advances from the negative to the *positive*, and affirms at once who the real Author was. "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go." He shows—(1) That *their* God had wrought the miracle. It was not a god, a deity believed in by some other peoples and nations; it was the God *they* believed in, *their* God, "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob." (2) That *their* God had wrought the miracle in order to *glorify his Son*. The miracle was not wrought for its own sake—not merely to restore a wretched invalid. It had an ulterior purpose. It was to confer honor on His Son, to furnish an additional attestation of the Messiahship of Him whom they had put to death as a malefactor.

II. HE CONNECTS THE MIRACLE WITH THE NAME OF CHRIST. "And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." In this verse the apostle seems to hit the philosophy, so to speak, of the miracle. God was the Author of it, they were the instruments; and they became the instruments because of their faith in the name of Christ;—the name of Christ means Christ himself. These apostles had unbounded faith in Jesus, as the true Messiah—the Saviour of the world—and because of this faith they were invested with the power to perform works that should demonstrate to the world the Divine authority of Him, in whose service they were engaged. The effects which, in consequence of their faith, they were enabled to produce upon the bodies of men, were only faint types of the sublime results which faith in Christ will enable its possessor to produce upon the spirits of mankind. Spiritual works are the greater works.

Now this Jesus, through faith in whom this miracle was performed, Peter takes the opportunity of bringing prominently

under their notice, so as to work upon their hearts the profoundest impressions concerning Him. He presents Him to them in three ways : in the titles that belong to Him ; in the history of their conduct ; and in His relation to their God.

First: *In the titles that belong to Him.* He describes Him as the Son of God, having a relation to the Eternal, unique in all that is close and tender;—as the “Holy One and the Just”;—attributes these, which the consciences of Judas who betrayed Him, and Pilate who condemned Him, were bound to ascribe to Him; and as the “*Prince of Life*,” the Leader, the Chief, the Captain of Life. Secondly: *In the history of their conduct.* He sketches their treatment of Him. This he does in a kind of graduated method, until he reaches the terrible crisis of murder.

(1) They “delivered him up.” They abandoned Him to His enemies; “he came to his own, and his own received him not,” they rejected Him. (2) They “denied” Him in the presence of Pilate, denied His Messiahship in the presence of a heathen ruler; this indignity they offered to their Messiah before the face of a scoffer at their religion, and a tyrant of their country. (3) They did this when Pilate was determined “to let him go.” Though this heathen ruler was so convinced of His innocence, that he was determined to release Him, their clamor overbore his judgment, and thwarted his wish. (4) They desired “a murderer” to be granted unto them, and not only demanded the condemnation of the innocent, but they preferred the destroyer of life, the murderer Barabbas, to the Prince of Life, the Saviour, Jesus of Nazareth. (5) They killed Him. “And killed the Prince of Life.” Here is the climax of folly and impiety; the top stone in hell’s grand edifice of crime. He presents Him to them—Thirdly: *In His relation to God.* (1) God had glorified Him in the miracles of His apostles—“He hath glorified his Son Jesus.” (2) He raised Him from the dead. “Whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses.” They killed the Prince of Life, but He raised Him from the grave. His resurrection from the dead was a fact too obvious, too patent for them to question—“whereof

we are witnesses." (3) He overruled their conduct towards Him. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before hath shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Observe—(1) It was the purpose of the Eternal Father that Christ should suffer. "*God had before shewed by the mouth of all his holy prophets, that Christ should suffer.*" "All his prophets" means not literally all, but the general voice of prophecy. The Old Testament prophets may be regarded as an official corporation—a grand representative body, and their utterances, therefore, are rather the voice of one than of many. The ruling reference of all is to the Messiah, His birth, His works, His sufferings, His death. (Isaiah liii. 3—10; Daniel ix. 26). Observe—(2) That this conduct of the Jewish people, in relation to Christ, was overruled for the working out of this grand purpose. "He hath so fulfilled," or fulfilled so. The sufferings which He eternally purposed were inflicted not directly by Himself, not by the agency of holy intelligences, but by the wicked conduct of wicked men. "The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him, but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel." So perfect is the control which the great Monarch of the universe has over His creatures, that He makes the greatest rebels His servants to work out His grandest plans. Observe—(3) The wicked Jew, in thus working out the Divine purpose, was ignorant of what he was doing. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." "I wot." (*oïda*) An old English verb "to know;" so that it means, "I know that through ignorance ye did it." Peter admits their ignorance for one of two purposes, either to extenuate their guilt, or to impress them with the fact, that, contrary to both their knowledge and their design, their very wickedness was the working out of an eternal plan. The former idea, though it has some passages to recommend it (Luke xxxiii. 34; 1 Tim. i. 13; 1 Cor. ii. 8) is inadmissible, from the fact, that Peter includes

the rulers in his charge of ignorance. "Also your rulers." The rulers, the most enlightened and the best Biblically instructed of the nation and the times, were certainly not ignorant of what they were doing; the latter, therefore, is the probable idea. This ignorance does not extenuate their guilt, but rather adds to it a crushing sense of their own folly and helplessness. In treating this miracle—

### III. HE DEVELOPS THE CHRISTIAN PLAN OF RESTITUTION.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." *This passage may be regarded as presenting the Christian plan for effecting the moral restitution of the world, and it suggests the following thoughts in relation to that plan.*

First: *It aims at a thorough spiritual reformation as a necessary condition.* This spiritual reformation is here represented as including three things:—*A change of heart, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted." Forgiveness of sins, "That your sins may be blotted out." Invigoration of being, "When the times of refreshing shall come," &c.* All these things are included in that great spiritual reformation which Christianity aims to accomplish in our world. Another thought suggested here concerning the Christian plan of restitution is—

Secondly: *That it is ever under the direction of the Great God.* "From the presence of the Lord," i.e., by the Providence of the Lord. Observe here, that the *invigorating influence of the scheme is from God.* The times of refreshing are from *His presence.* The *Chief Agent of the scheme is from God.* "He shall send Jesus Christ." *That the revelation of the scheme is from God.* "Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Another thought still suggested concerning the Christian plan of restitution is—

Thirdly: *That it shall realise its end before the final advent of*

*Christ.* "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things." *Christ is now in heaven.* He is there as the monarch of the creation, the representative of humanity, the object of universal wonder and worship. Though in heaven, His work proceeds on earth. His system is slowly but gradually advancing. When the work is accomplished, He will come again, and not before. Pre-millennialism is a dream.\* Another thought suggested concerning the Christian plan of restitution is—

Fourthly : *That it is the grand burden of prophetic truth.* "Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Observe the cases of prophetic references to Christ which the apostle adduces. The first case is Moses. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me ; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." This passage is found in Deut. xviii. 15, 19. The quotation is made with scarcely any variation from the Septuagint version. The resemblance between Christ and Moses as prophets, mediators, legislators, and founders of new dispensations, is so strikingly obvious that it forms the basis of many a popular sermon. Samuel is mentioned. "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after." Moses and Samuel are the most distinguished names in the history of the Jewish nation—the strongest human centres in Jewish association. But these men are simply mentioned here as samples and references. He says, "All the prophets." We may not be able always to trace references to Christ in the writings of each prophet ; yet in the majority of the prophetic books, there are notes of hope struck from the harp of future ages, flashes of light from that bright day of Christ which Abraham saw afar. Observe the reason for the adduction of these references. "Ye are the children of

\* See "Homilist," Vol. V., p. 260.



the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." "Children," a phrase not indicative of physical descent, but of spiritual relationship. They were the pupils, the disciples of the prophets. They inherited the writings; they were their acknowledged authorities in all cases of faith and practice. They were the children of the covenant; they were admitted to all its privileges, a party in the compact in which the Lord should be their God and they His people. He states their close spiritual relation to the prophets and to the covenant, it would seem, as a reason for his prophetic reference, and truly a good reason too. Prophecy was their Bible; the acknowledged rule of their present and the bright hope of their future. Another idea suggested in relation to the Christian plan of restitution is—

Fifthly: *That its merciful mission was first to be presented to the Jews.* "Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Observe—(1) *Christ was sent to bless, not to curse. Justly might we have expected malediction to have been His mission.* Observe—(2) *Christ was sent to bless with the greatest blessing.* "Turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Iniquity is the greatest curse; to turn men from that is the greatest boon. Observe—(3) *Christ was sent to bless with the greatest blessing the greatest sinners first.* You first—"beginning at Jerusalem." \*

(To be continued.)

# Germ of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*The Scape-Goat.*

“And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.”—Levit. xvi. 9, 10.

*Analysis of Family the Six Hundred and Fifty-first.*

**T**HIS chapter is remarkable for the history it gives of one of the most ancient, famous, significant, and religious institutions of the Jews, namely, the Great Day of Atonement. The tenth day in every seventh month was a high day in Israel. The religious heart of the Hebrew nation was deeply stirred on that day, and every man was “to afflict his soul.” He was to humble himself before his Maker on account of his sins. On that day the high priest was to make atonement for himself, the tabernacle, and all the people. Amongst the many ceremonies which he had to attend to on that day, the one recorded in the text is not the least striking and significant. Two goats are presented at the door of the tabernacle; the one is to be offered as a sacrifice, the other is to be dispatched into the wilderness bearing away with it the sins of the Jewish people. The one is to be sacrificed, and his blood poured on the altar as a sin offering. The other, called the “scape-goat,” the high priest, in the presence of all the people, lays his hand upon, confesses over it all the sins of the children of Israel, and sends it away into the wilderness. That sin-burdened animal is heard of no more for ever.

Is this, and the other ceremonies attended to on that memorable day, a mere show—an empty pageant—to attract the gaze of a thoughtless population? I trow not. Everything attended to on that day was fraught with significance;

every act of the priest was a symbol of truth. There are three truths that flash forth with great brilliancy and force from these ceremonies—truths that are of paramount importance to man the world over and the ages through.

I. THAT THE SEPARATION OF MAN FROM HIS SINS IS A SUBJECT OF TREMENDOUS MOMENT. Why this solemn day in every year, through fifteen long centuries before Christ? Why do all the people cease from their ordinary avocations on this day? Why are the souls of the people afflicted? Why are all hearts heaving with solemn emotions? And why does such a sombre shadow rest upon the people? Why is the high priest so terribly solemn in changing his robes, in ablutions, in sacrificing the lives of innocent creatures, in sprinkling the tabernacle and the mercy-seat so often with blood? Why does he with such solemnity send the scape-goat into the wilderness? The meaning of all is this, *that separation of sin from man is essentially important.* And what reflective man, whatever his creed, will not acknowledge it to be so? What man, who has ever felt a conscience, has not felt it to be so?

First : *The moral struggles of mankind show the necessity of man being separated from his sins.* What are all the sacrifices of priesthoods, the campaigns of patriots, the measures of statesmen, the speculations of moralists, the labors of philanthropy, the incessant strivings of the millions, but so many efforts to throw off sin, to detach humanity from the evils that afflict and burden it. Paul gave voice to the world's heart when he said, "Oh, wretched man that I am," &c.

Secondly : *The influence of sin on human nature shows this.* What evils has sin entailed on us! It has mortalized our bodies; it has clouded our intellects, polluted our affections, burdened our consciences, enfeebled and enslaved our powers; it has darkened our sky, and withered our landscape. Unless we are delivered from it we are ruined.

Thirdly : *The intervention of Christ shows this.* Why did the Son of God bow the heavens and come down, assume our

nature, and in that nature suffer and die ! It was to deliver man from his sins. He came to save His people from their sins, to redeem them from all iniquity, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Another truth which flashes out in the ceremonies of this day is—

II. THAT A PENITENTIAL APPROACH TO GOD THROUGH SACRIFICE IS THE DIVINE METHOD OF SEPARATION. On this day the bullock and the goat were slain, and their blood sprinkled on the mercy-seat. These sacrifices imply two things—

First : *That sin deserved death.* Would not this be the impression that the Jew would receive on this day, as he saw the stroke of death dealt out to these creatures ? Surely the idea would strike every spectator, “that the soul that sinneth must die,” &c. The sacrifices imply—

Secondly : *That through the death of another the sinner's death may be avoided.* These sacrifices, undoubtedly, express this, and symbolically predicted the wonderful sacrifice of the Son of God. In both cases there was the suffering of the innocent for the guilty. Christ was “the Holy Lamb of God,” “He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,” &c. In both cases, the sacrifice was for all the people. The sacrifices on the day of atonement were for all the men of Israel. For whom did Christ die ? He suffered, “the just for the unjust.” And who are the unjust ? “He is the propitiation for our sins : and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” It is through this sacrifice of Christ, that this separation of man from his sins takes place. His blood “cleanseth us from all sin.” The song of heaven is, “Unto him that loved us,” &c.

Another truth which flashes out in the ceremonies of this day is—

III. THAT THE SEPARATION OF MAN FROM HIS SIN, IF EFFECTED THROUGH THE TRUE SACRIFICE, IS COMPLETE. After the

sacrifice had been offered on this day, and the people through Aaron made penitential confession for sin, Aaron lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sent him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. (verse 21.) What became of that goat? It never returned. It was lost in the mysterious solitudes of the wilderness, and never heard of any more. A striking illustration this, of the complete removal of man's guilt, when, through faith in Christ, his sins are pardoned. What striking language is employed in the Bible to represent the completeness of the separation of man's sin from him, when he is pardoned of God. They are said to be cast behind the back of God. Where is that? His face is everywhere. It is the light and life of the universe. They are said to be cast into the sea, not into the shallow lake or purling brook where they may appear again, but into the depths of the sea, the abysses of oblivion. They are said to be "removed as far as the east is from the west." How far is that? So far that eternal ages will never bring them together. What is borne away? Not the *fact* nor the *memory* of sin, but the *guilt* of it.

In conclusion, let me again remind you of the necessity of your separation from sin. Sin neutralizes every other blessing. You may have great natural powers, extensive culture, a reputation as a man of genius, of honor, of religion; but if sin is joined to you, all these things avail you nothing; they are only as flowers to a corpse, concealing for a moment the ghastliness of death, but leaving the putrefaction to go on. Where sin is, it must sooner or later turn the sweetest things of life into wormwood and gall.

Let me remind you again, that there is no separation of man from his sins, but through the intervention of Christ. He is the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." His blood, His life, cleanseth from all sin. I look in imagination on the myriads of my race that are in the heavenly world,

and I ask, Who are these arrayed in white, and whence came they? And the answer comes, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes," &c.

Let me remind you again, that you have only, like Aaron, penitentially to confess your sins over the head of the sacrificial victim, in order to have them borne away for ever.



SUBJECT :—*The Christian's Great Aim.*

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."—Rom. ii. 7.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-second.*

**C**HRISTIANS are remarkable for their high aims and wonderful forethought. Some men do not provide for the future at all. They live in the present and have no aim beyond. They thus make themselves less than the lower animals; and the results of this conduct are often fearful. Others, again, provide for the little uncertain future of this life; and hence they seek money, and fame, and power, and pleasure. But Christians not only provide for the little future which we call time, but for all the future. They exercise foresight, and make provision for all eternity. Consider—

I. THE OBJECT OF THE CHRISTIAN'S PURSUIT. What do Christians seek? They seek a crown. They seek δόξα, and τιμή, and ἀφθαρσία. The crown which they seek therefore is a triple crown. It is a crown of "glory and honour and immortality." But is not this mercenary? Does not this reduce their virtue to a thing of hollow utility? That it does not will appear if we consider their motive. Motive colors human action, and stamps it with a character of goodness or badness. For instance a murderer draws blood, and a physician draws blood. The action is the same in both cases. But the one draws blood to kill, the other to cure. In like manner Christians seek δόξα, and τιμή, and ἀφθαρσία, with the chief design of glorifying God with them.

Their great aim is that they may serve God day and night in His temple, unweariedly, uninterruptedly, perfectly and perpetually. They seek crowns of "glory and honour and immortality," that they may cast them at Jesus' feet.

First: *They seek a glorious position.* δόξαν, "glory," "majesty." The Hebrew equivalent is *kavod*. The inhabitants of heaven are all glorious within, and all glorious without. All is glorious above them, beneath them, and all around them. When they walk, it is amid scenes of glory; when they sit, it is upon thrones of glory; and as they sit, crowns of glory are flashing from their brows.

Secondly: *They seek the highest praise.* τιμήν, "honor." The corresponding Hebrew word is *hadar*. δόξα and τιμή are like each other, and yet unlike. There is unity and variety in heaven. In the δόξα, the absolute predominates; in the τιμή, the relative. τιμή, "price," "value," "honor." The honor of heaven is of the highest kind. Courtiers have spent months and years to insinuate themselves into the special favor of their king; while the great majority of the human race have not spent a single hour in seeking the smile of God. And yet to have the approbation of the highest potentate of earth, is nothing compared with the approbation of the King of Glory. It is to have the esteem of the Highest, the Holiest, the Wisest, and the Best.

Thirdly: *They seek to hold this position and this praise in perpetual possession.* ἀφθαρσίαν, "incorruptibility." The crown which Christians seek has in it the gem of immortality. ἀφθαρσία, refers not so much to the resurrection body—not so much to moral excellence—as to δόξα and τιμή. δόξα and τιμή will walk together through eternity; and as they walk, they shall wave palms glittering with the dews of immortal bliss. There is here a contrast between the things of earth and of heaven. Here, the leaf must wither and the flower must die; there, the leaf is evergreen and the flower amaranthine. Here, the tooth of time triumphs over the grandest idol temples of human trust, and turns them to dust; there, the minstrels of redeeming love engage in a worship which has no stain, no interval, and no end, in the temple of eternity.

## II. THE MEANS EMPLOYED IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THIS OBJECT.

**First :** *There is the performance of good works.* ἔργον αγαθόν, "good doing." This universe is an infinite conjugation of the verb "to do." And it is either conjugated ill or well. By the Christian, it is conjugated well. His life is a harmony. This "good doing" is something more than faith. Undoubtedly, faith at first is alone, as the seedling is alone in the soil. But, like the living seed, living faith brings forth in due time appropriate and abundant fruit.

**Secondly :** *There is the patient performance of good works.* ὑπομένω, like the Hebrew *kavah*, means "to wait," ὑπομενῆν, therefore, signifies "patient continuance." It is "patient continuance in good doing." And "good doing" in this world is climbing the steep, often with bleeding feet. The world is not yet so Christ-like, that the followers of Christ can pass through it without persecution. Hence, while here, they require to exercise the Divine virtue of patience; and patience is true heroism.

**Thirdly :** *There is perseverance in the performance of good works.* "Patient continuance in good doing" is absolutely indispensable. For it is only those who patiently bear the cross that can triumphantly wear the crown; only those who endure to the end that secure δόξα, &c. There is a twilight that tends to noon night, there is a twilight that ends in noon light. The evening twilight deepens into the darkness of mid-night, the morning twilight broadens into the brightness of noon-day. Hence would we not only secure present but permanent well-being, our twilight must be the morning one. Our life must resemble the sun in his commencement, continued course, and consummation. We must travel onward and upward to "the perfect day" of knowledge, "the perfect day" of purity, and "the perfect day" of joy.

## III. THE OBJECT OBTAINED BY THE MEANS EMPLOYED.

Those who seek in the way described not only find what they seek, but much more. They not only find δόξα, and τιμή, and ἀφθαρσία, but also ζῆν αἰώνιον. "They are made partakers of the Divine nature." They are put in perpetual possession



of Divine light, life and love; Divine peace, purity and power; Divine guidance, guardianship and glory; Divine brightness, beauty and bliss.

First: *This life is pure.* In heaven the rose of love has no thorn, the lily of purity no worm, the cup of pleasure no poison. The bliss of ransomed saints is as pure as the bliss of God. In heaven the white-robed choristers sing the new song of *unmingled* joy.

Secondly: *This life is progressive.* Life here, ever tends to death; life there, to life. Here we carry the seeds of mortality and the germs of sorrow about with us; there the seeds of immortality and the germs of bliss. The Christian's immortality is not fixed, but growing. His dawns of knowledge ever become noons, and the noons the light of seven days. His streams of joy ever become floods, and the floods oceans.

Thirdly: *This life is permanent.* The perpetuity of heavenly happiness is secured by the eternity of God. "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die." (Hab. i. 12.) The best bank of earth may break, and we may lose our all; the finest fortress may be reduced to ruin, and our lives destroyed. But nothing can touch the Christian's wealth; nothing can hurt the Christian's life; for they are "hid with Christ in God." The perpetuity of heavenly happiness is secured, moreover, by the promise of Christ. He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19); and, "He is faithful that promised." We know that the natural sun once stood still; but we know of no one who can affirm that Christ, "the Sun of Righteousness," has ever failed, even in a single instance, to keep His promise. In heaven, therefore, the Christian's glory cannot fade; his honor cannot be tarnished; his peace cannot be broken; his joy cannot be exchanged for sorrow; his life cannot die. His crown of life, after millions of milleniums have gone, will not only be in his possession, but will *then* be more beautiful, bright, and blissful than when first put on. Life in heaven is from glory to glory, from starlight to sunlight, brighter and brighter for ever and ever.

JOHN DUNLOP.

SUBJECT :—*Paul's Wish to be Accursed from Christ.*

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."—Rom. ix. 3.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-third.*

I. THE GRAND PRINCIPLE CONTAINED IN OUR TEXT. The regeneration of human society, inducing a state of practical righteousness on earth, is the one object of God in Christ. Through the subtlety and craft of the devil, and man's guilt, the normal state of humanity, to say the least, was sadly interfered with. In again making a stand for that condition—unwilling that it should only be spoken of as that which *was* our state—*anxious* that it should still, and evermore, be regarded such—*what* should we pronounce the *desideratum*? Is it not this? "*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,*" &c. Complete selfishness is man's fall. Perfect sacrifice is his rise, or salvation. And this not only on the part of man, but also on the part of Him who was to redeem man—God's fellow. The children partook of flesh and blood; He did the same. If righteousness can be realized, He will realize it for the race. If righteousness can be realized, it must be by His own method and plan. By offering up Himself—that human and Divine self—He redeemed human nature. He showed by this act—in Himself—the power was equal to the required and wished-for result. He rose the third day, *and through death destroyed him who had the power of death—the devil*. That was how He took away the sin of the world—man's antagonism to God—his devilish individualism. The grand sin of *self* was met by a force, that, step by step from Bethlehem onwards, mastered and destroyed it. The law of Christ, and not self, is the law of man. Christ gave up all to His Father's righteous and loving will. He had nothing of His own. He did nought but what He saw His Father do. There was hard suffering and battling. "*If it be possible,*" &c. But the power and the love were there; righteousness was ever realized; sacrifice was in His heart. "*Nevertheless, not my will,*" &c.

II. THE GRAND PRINCIPLE EMBODIED IN THE APOSTLE. Into what depths of sacrifice, Divine life, do the words of the apostle penetrate, if but humbly and simply regarded—"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ," &c. Giving way to that habit of mind, quite too common, of regarding much of most important Scripture statement as mere rhetoric flourish, or poetic licence, we shall not think so, we certainly shall not find it so. But the observant and thoughtful reader of the apostle's writings must know, that his was anything but the high-flown style many would fix on him. He was eminently practical and solid—what he said, he meant. The life that was in Paul was the life of Christ. The Spirit that came from Paul was the Spirit of Christ. That Spirit now speaks through him. Christ was manifested to take away sin. He took it away by the sacrifice of Himself. Paul is grounded in Christ. He is persuaded that "*neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" He is conscious that he is about giving utterance to the root principle of Divine redemption; and would have us know that he is in no wise overstating his case—"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost." Speaking from his stand-point, which is the Christian stand-point, he speaks the TRUTH IN CHRIST; his speech evidences the naturalism, and at the same time, the supernaturalism of the Christian faith, Christ manifesting Himself in one of our race. He is with man in His regenerative influence—and, regenerative it is. Paul is not his own. He is willing to give up life—not a blasted, poisoned life—but a joyous, holy life; to give up *Himself*. He is Christ's; and Christ's course and life, he is anxious, should explain and absorb his. And he reaches this point by no process of reasoning. His consciousness, grounded in the Redeemer, declares its anxiety to manifest, in behalf of his own people—if by possibility he might serve them—as

much as is possible of the deepest and Divinest spirit of Christ Himself. Not merely did he remember that Christ was made a curse for man. He did this ; but he did more. He *felt* in his own spiritual nature the result of this, and this being the essential principle in redemption, was with him nothing short of a Divine intention. Christ being made a curse *did* involve what of all things was most awful to Him—separation from His Father. This came of His love and His righteousness, and His perfect identification with the heart of His Father. Thus He became—God having raised Him from the dead—the Redeemer of man, and thereby He triumphed openly over sin. Paul was willing in his measure to permit the life of Christ to work through his mortal body, and to assert dominion over his mere earthly life. Could he in this sense stand in any relation to his people—his kinsmen according to the flesh—he was willing to be accursed from Christ, as Christ was accursed from His Father. Notice then—

First : *The correction of a popular error.* Paul, in expressing his wish to be accursed from Christ, no more implied his willingness to be for ever separated from Him—in other words, to perish everlastingly—than is that idea implied in Christ's separation from His Father, when He was made a curse for man.

Secondly : *The essential purpose and work of Christianity.* "*Myself.*" This it is which stands in the way of God and all goodness. The evil, self, under the dominion of the evil one, is our curse, and the world's curse. It is so, however, necessarily. The vanquishment *here* is complete. "*For I could wish that myself,*" &c. We have the victory, thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly : *The reality of human redemption.* Look at Paul. Regard his life and history. He was human and sinful ; one of that race of which he wrote, "*There is no difference.*" But he submitted himself to the righteousness of God in Christ. This is the privilege and first duty of man everywhere.

Cork.

R. G.

## Biblical Criticism.

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### THE CODEX SINAITICUS:—*Various Readings.*

WE now proceed to catalogue variations in the Gospel of Mark, following the same method as before, with one exception. Some of the instances of variation in our last number, were, perhaps, chiefly valuable as illustrations of the unimportant nature of many of the deviations of the Codex from the received text. Sufficing having done for that purpose, we shall, as we advance, confine ourselves more rigidly to such as have considerable interest.

#### ADDITIONS.

Mark i. 34.—At the end of this verse, a reviser of about the seventh century inserts *τον Χριστον εἶναι*.

Mark iii. 14.—After *δωδεκα*,—*οὓς και αποστολους ωνομασεν*.

Mark iii. 16.—At the beginning, *και εποιησεν τους δωδεκα*.

Mark viii. 29.—After *ὁ Χριστος*, read *ὁ υἱος τοῦ Θεοῦ*.

#### OMISSIONS.

Mark i. 14.—*τῆς βασιλειας*.

Mark ii. 17.—*εις μετανοιαν*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark iii. 15.—*θεραπευειν τας νοσους, και*.

Mark iv. 11.—*γινῶναι*. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark iv. 24.—*τοῖς ακουουσιν*. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark vi. 11.—From *αμην λεγω* to the end of the verse, is wanting.

Mark vi. 48.—From *ὁ δε απελθων* to *την κεφαλην αὐτοῦ*. But this omission *may* have been a mere error of the scribe, occasioned by the *αὐτοῦ . . . αὐτοῦ*. (See our paper for

March, on errors of this description. Also, remarks on ὁμοιοτελευτον in "Davidson's Biblical Criticism," p. 470.)

Mark vii. 2.—εμεψαντο. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark vii. 8.—From βαπτισμους to the end of the verse.

Mark vii. 16.—This verse is wholly wanting.

## SUBSTITUTIONS.

Mark i. 2.—Instead of τοῖς προφηταῖς, we read τῷ ἡσαΐα τῷ προφητῇ.

Mark i. 24.—οιδαμεν for οἶδα.

Mark iii. 19.—Ισκαριωθ for Ισκαριωτην. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark iii. 29.—ἀμαρτηματος for κρισεως. So Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark iii. 31.—This verse begins thus: και ερχεται ἡ μητηρ αὐτοῦ και οἱ ἀδελφοι αὐτου. It also has καλοῦντες for φωνοῦντες, which is less polite. In the latter variation, coincide the editions of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark v. 1.—Instead of Γαδαρηνῶν, the original scribe wrote Γερασσηνῶν, which is the reading of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles. But a corrector writes Γεργεσηνῶν.

Mark v. 41.—κουμ for κουμι.

Mark vi. 3.—Ιωσηφ for Ιωσή. Compare the reading of the Codex in Matt. xxvii. 56. This reading will be noticed in connexion with the discussion of the brethren of the Lord.

Mark vi. 20.—ηπορει for εποιει. A very interesting variation, and probably the genuine original text. It makes better sense than the received text, yet it is not of a nature likely to have been on that account foisted in.

Mark vi. 22.—αυτοῦ for αυτῆς τῆς.

Mark vi. 24.—Βαπτιζοντος for Βαπτιστοῦ.

Mark vii. 4.—ραντισωντε, that is, ραντισωνται, instead of βαπτισωνται.

Mark vii. 21, 22.—The order of μοιχεῖται, πορνεῖται, φονοι, κλοπαι, is as follows: πορνεῖται, κλοπαι, φονοι, μοιχεῖται.

Mark vii. 26.—Συροφοινικισσα for Συροφοινισσα.

Mark vii. 31.—*ἦλθεν δια Σιδῶνος εἰς*, instead of *καὶ Σιδῶνος, ἦλθε πρὸς*. A new fact in our Lord's history.

Mark viii. 25.—*διεβλεψεν*, instead of *εποίησεν αὐτὸν ἀναβλεψαι*.

Mark viii. 31.—*ὑπο* for *απο*, a variation which has some grammatical importance.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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WE now enter on some practical and detailed advices respecting the subject and order of studies and the choice of books. As our aim is to serve the student as much as possible, we commence with subjects which are in various ways preparative to theology, although not included therein.

Since the science of mind is closely related to theology, he who intends studying the latter, is earnestly recommended to qualify himself by the acquisition of the former. On the whole, he can hardly do better than to take Dr. Thomas Reid as his chief guide, and he should use Sir William Hamilton's edition of his works, for the sake of the notes, which are very valuable. Since, however, much of Reid's space is taken up by discussion of the opinions of his predecessors, acquaintance with their writings is necessary as a preparation for the complete understanding of their opponent. The history of the science of the mind in England practically begins with "Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding." Let the student follow the order of development by taking Bishop Berkeley next, and reading his "Principles of Human Knowledge," his "Three Dialogues," and his "Essay towards a

New Theory of Vision." After him, comes David Hume, who has expounded the principles of universal scepticism with more ability, and carried them out more fearlessly and consistently, than any other writer. We refer not so much to his "Essays," as to his early "Treatise of Human Nature." The task which Reid set himself was the demolition of scepticism—the less-developed scepticism of Berkeley, the full-blown scepticism of Hume. In order to bring this about, he was obliged to undertake the correction of certain mistakes of Locke, which had given occasion to the more serious errors of his successors. This complete task was well accomplished by Dr. Reid. He was gifted with a remarkable facility in accurate observation and analysis of mental phenomena, his works laid a solid foundation for the science of mind, and continue to this day the best introduction to the study in the English language.

After Reid on the "Active Powers," the student should proceed to "Butler's Three Sermons on Human Nature," and then to Cudworth's "Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality," which will complete a course of Moral Philosophy as excellent as short.

From the intimate relation of the science of mind to philosophy properly so called, it has inevitably arisen, that, to a very large extent, the authors named above have treated of the latter in conjunction with the former. If, however, the student should desire a further excursion into metaphysical regions, and to make some acquaintance with German speculation, he should read the second edition of "Morell's History of Modern Philosophy." But if he knows German, it will be more advantageous in regard to precision and clearness, to learn what are the original terms employed by these philosophers, since they are incapable of satisfactory translation. This he may do by the aid of "*Historische Entwicklung der speculativen Philosophie, von Kant bis Hegel*," by Dr. H. M. Chalybaeus.

We do not, however, recommend the student to lose himself in German speculation until he has formed the better



acquaintance of that philosopher whose writings have ever been regarded as the most congruous with Christian doctrine—we mean Plato. And inasmuch as there is no good English translation of his “Dialogues,” there is nothing left for the sufficiently eager student but bravely to gird himself for the original. Not that we seriously advise him to complete the study of Plato before addressing himself to the Scriptures. A few of the “Dialogues” will suffice to put him in possession of the manner, and to enable him to draw in the spirit of Plato. Let him begin with the “Phaedrus,” and proceed to the “Lysis” and the “Symposium.” Then let him take the “Gorgias,” the “Theaetetus,” and the “Republic.” The Socratic trilogy, consisting of the “Apology,” the “Crito,” and the “Phaedo,” must not be omitted. The best Introduction to the “Dialogues” of Plato which we have met with in English, is by Professor Sewell. It is, however, only an excellent fragment. The Introductions to the particular “Dialogues” in Stalbaum’s edition are inestimable.

Logic will have already been treated of to some extent in certain of the above “Dialogues;” yet the student will not be able to dispense with Whately, after whom he should proceed to John Stuart Mill. Since, however, the practice of logic is quite as important as the theory, we would strenuously urge him to the discipline in deduction which is afforded by “Euclid’s Geometry,” and by the “Elements of Algebra.” But above all we recommend, and even as indispensable, the study of language, as it involves precisely the same mental processes of accurate observation, analysis and classification, which are to be used in theology. The science of language is the highest branch of Natural History, since it deals with the border land of mind and body, where their intercourse is the closest and their mutual influence the greatest. The mental processes which are used in chymistry or botany, are a good preliminary discipline for the theologian, since his science is not exact and demonstrative, but deals with facts which are the statements of authority. But these very processes are

involved in the science of language, and are here even more delicate and are employed on a choicer material.

Taking it for granted that the student's attention will be directed to Latin and Greek, we counsel him to join Hebrew therewith. He will thus not only be employed with facts, which, from their primitive simplicity and their admirable illustration of the laws of language, are extremely interesting to the philologist, but he will also be making a direct preparation for that thorough knowledge of the Scriptures which characterizes the true divine.

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## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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### *The Third Sunday after Trinity.*

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."—Luke xv. 10.

*This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.* Unconscious praise is sometimes drawn from the lips of enemies. The Pharisees and Scribes complained of the Lord's kindness to sinners, not knowing that they were sinners themselves. Because they were not gross and scandalous offenders, they thought that they were righteous. They resented the Lord's care for publicans as an affront to themselves. The three parables which this chapter contains constitute His reply to their oburgation. He condescends to justify Himself by showing that He acts in harmony with the best feelings of men, and with the principles of Heaven. Thus that which they charge on Him as a fault was His greatest glory. It is so still. Even now we have no higher thing to say of Christ than this:—*This man receiveth sinners.*

These three parables are all intended to set forth one truth; which is, that the vexation occasioned by loss and the joy of

recovery, are immeasurably greater than the calm satisfaction of undisturbed possession. The shepherd forgot his ninety-nine sheep in seeking the *one* which was lost. The woman heeded not her nine safe pieces of silver, but was troubled about the *one* which was missing. The father's grief after the son that was gone was greater than his satisfaction with him that remained at home. And the joy of recovery in each of these cases is proportionate to the sorrow and vexation which it supersedes. How true this is to *human* nature we all know ; and our Lord Jesus intends to teach us that it is as true in heaven as on earth.

Each of the parables illustrates the point in a manner somewhat different from the others. In the first, the sinner is a silly sheep, ignorant of his own welfare, stupidly going astray, and only restored by the anxious search of the shepherd. In the second, he is a piece of money, to recover which no pains must be spared. In the third, the representation is the most touching of all. If a shepherd grieves over a wandering sheep, how much more shall a father after his lost son ! In the tenderness of the *human* father we see a faint representation of the tenderness of God. If a man rejoices over his recovered son, how much more shall our Heavenly Father over the return of the penitent !

*There is joy in the presence the of angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* How different the occasions of joy on earth and in heaven ! The most prominent joy amongst men is on account of what contributes to their own frivolous gratification, or favors their interest, or vain-glory, or self-indulgence. The most prominent joy of heaven is unselfish ; it has reference to earth, it is occasioned by the repentance of a sinner.

This fact proves the *superiority of angels to men.*

It proves the superiority of their *character.*

Concerning angels we learn but little from Holy Scripture. We know that they are higher than we, that they have physical and intellectual superiority. But perhaps this passage throws more light than any other on their *character.* If you know what are a man's predilections, the occasions of his chief

pleasures, you cannot be ignorant of the man. Now, although few particulars are uncovered concerning angels, yet we know the occasion of their mightiest *joy*, and this gives us the key to their character, and discloses the secret of their lives.

It is their *piety* which makes them rejoice, for the sinner's repentance gives glory to God. Their *benevolence* also makes them rejoice, for the sinner's repentance ensures his restoration to peace, and is a pledge of his highest happiness.

Their joy over the sinner's repentance proves the superiority of their *knowledge*. Things which are secrets on earth are notorious in heaven. The repentance of a sinner is for this world often an obscure event. It begins in secret, and often excites but little attention afterwards. But it is known in heaven from the very first. Nathanael kneels under the fig tree, and prays and weeps. The stream of life, of commerce, politics and pleasure, rolls on at a distance unaffected. He is unseen of men but not of angels. They are invisibly present, and note the transaction, and "there is joy in heaven."

The joy of angels over a sinner's repentance is partly a *re-action*. They were in deep and anxious grief on his account before. *Sin* is to them a stupendous and unspeakable evil, a foul blot on the beauty of the creation, a contradiction against God, and the ruin of man. They bewailed the entrance of it into the world; they have bewailed the progress of it, and the dominion of it over every individual transgressor. But when repentance comes, sin receives the death-blow. In proportion, therefore, to their former sorrow, is their present joy. The greater the sin repented of and forgiven, and the more complete the repentance, the greater and fuller is their joy. The blot is now wiped away, God is reconciled, and a soul is saved.

The joy of the angels at a sinner's repentance is, perhaps, sometimes *mutual congratulation at the success of their endeavors*. We know that good men often benefit us by their suggestions, their examples, their prayers, and their mysterious influence, which wins us over into the right way. We know, also, that evil angels have power to tempt us, and that we, too

often, alas ! yield to their persuasion. Shall not good angels, then, have power with us for good ? We are assured by Scripture that they have, that they are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Who can tell how many blessings they secretly minister ? How many evils are warded off by their watchful guardianship ? In how many ways they try to do us good, would we only permit it ? By how many avenues they have access to our hearts ? And how many methods they use to better our condition and rectify our lives ? We may be sure that their strong interest in us, as souls for which Christ died, leads them to use their advantages, to ply every means with diligence, perseverance, and anxiety. They have often to wait long for the fruit of their care, sometimes to wait in vain. But when the means prosper, and the sinner's heart melts ; when they witness the inarticulate groaning, the sob, the purified tear, the cry for mercy, then their song begins. They have succeeded, and they have their reward. "There is joy in heaven."

The joy of the angels at a sinner's repentance is a token of the joy of their Lord. We judge of a monarch by the pomp and style of his ambassadors, and of the nobles about the court. His grandeur, and often even his *character*, is reflected in them. Now the angels are nobles of the court of heaven, God's messengers and ambassadors. They are emphatically "angels of God." Their character is greatly in harmony with His, and much of His character may be learnt from theirs. That which occasions pleasure to them, is well-pleasing to Him, and in a far larger measure. If there is joy among the angels at the repentance of a sinner, God is the Original Abode and Spring of that joy. The angels sympathize with Him according to their measure, but He rejoices far more than they. Christ is *better than the angels*, (Heb. i. 4) and His joy over repentance is more excellent and mighty, and is the fountain of theirs.

When our Lord Jesus was on earth, He was "a man of sorrows." His life here was for the most part saddened by our

sadness and sin. This world has seen Christ in sorrow ; it has hardly known Him in joy. Christ in joy is a mystery hidden in heaven. The definition of heaven is—the abode of Christ in joy. And the essence and character of His joy is—that it is joy over repenting sinners.

We have said that when Christ was on earth He was generally in sorrow. Yea ; but there were moments of relief and intermission, moments even of joy, which had a like occasion with that in the text. *In that hour*, says the evangelist, *Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* (Luke x. 21.)

Even when Jesus was on the cross, amid all His bodily and mental anguish, there was a moment of relief ; in the dreadful gloom of that hour there was one serene ray of heavenly brightness. It was when His face lighted up with unutterable love, as He said to the penitent and supplicating thief, *To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* For a moment the Saviour forgot His present suffering in the foretaste of *the joy that was set before Him.*

Brethren, we have sometimes felt inclined to speculate on the nature of heaven's happiness. We have longed for some celestial visitor to draw aside the curtain and show the joyful mystery. Let us speculate and yearn no more. Christ has opened heaven to us. We know now in what the joy of heaven consists. The angels and the redeemed from the earth rejoice—not because they rest in bowers of roses on the banks of gently flowing rivers, nor over amaranthine crowns, nor the brightness of their countenances, nor the sweetness of their music. *There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.*

Let us draw from this subject *encouragement to repentance.* God rejoiceth with His holy angels over every repenting sinner. Sin is the only object of His hatred, mercy is His delight. When therefore, sin is forsaken, He has infinite pleasure in restoring the soul. The greater the sinner, the greater God's joy at his return. Come to Him then, and make

the trial, and you will find that He will not despise your tears, nor refuse what is His greatest joy.

It was to lead us to repentance that Christ came from heaven. He "came to seek and to save that which was lost." It was to save us that He endured the shame and pain of the cross. Every new salvation is another portion of His reward, an earnest of His full satisfaction, when "He shall see of the travail of His soul." Fear not then to come to Him. He still "receiveth sinners." He will speak gently as of old and say : *Son, or Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven.*

We may draw from this subject not only an encouragement but also a  *motive* to repentance. It is in our power to increase the joy of heaven, to add new intensity to the raptures of angels and of the holy dead, to enhance the blessedness even of Christ.

Is there, then, any intemperate person here, whose conscience disturbs him amid his cups, whispering of guilt and shame, and suggesting fearful apprehension? Ask for God's help, brother, to lead you to repentance. His grace has no work which He more dearly loves than restoring such as you to sobriety, self-respect, usefulness, honor and hope. Or is there some covetous man here, who has often proved that he loves gold better than his own true welfare and the welfare of his brethren? It would indeed be a triumph of grace for your better nature to gain the ascendancy, but even this is a triumph of which grace is capable. Pray Christ to impart His own Spirit, to refine and ennoble you by contact with Himself.

Perhaps some of you have friends who have departed in peace, fathers or mothers who once watched for your salvation, prayed for it constantly and fervently, and died with the prayer on their lips. Brethren, *it is in your power by repentance to add to their happiness even now.* You can do this, and at the same time secure your own safety, and gain the prospect of joining them one day in the land of holiness and peace. Will you then not do it? God grant that you may!

Finally: *Let us emulate the angels* in their delight in repentance. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, describes certain of the worst of the wicked as *having pleasure in other men's sins*, an extreme of depravity truly diabolical. On the opposite side, we find saints and angels taking pleasure in the repentance of sinners. And the more of this disposition we have, the higher we rise. If the true character of heavenly blessedness is exultation over the repentance of sinners on earth—if this is the disposition of the redeemed, who have worked for Christ here, and are doubtless with the angels working for Him still—if this is the true meaning of *entering into the joy of their Lord*, whose greatest joy always was and is over repentant sinners—then we learn what the spirit of heaven is, and what fitness for it is. Do we desire heaven? Let us repent of our sins, and promote repentance in our *brethren*. Let sin ever be our greatest grief, recovery therefrom our constant aim, our dearest gratification. Let us regard as the choicest sight which earth can present, the weeping penitent returning to his Father's house; and, as the sweetest music, the words:—*Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son*. If we have this disposition, and consecrate our lives to this holy work, we shall be training for the world whose inhabitants and their King are even now working with the same purpose, and rejoicing in every instance of success, and we shall be ready when called ourselves, to rise and “enter into the joy of our Lord.”

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### THE IRON BLUNT, AND THE IRON WHETTED.

"If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct."—Eccles. x. 10.

(Explain the connexion.)

THE text suggests two things concerning human labor, namely, that the *less facilities in work, the greater is the strength required*; and that *practical sagacity in work serves to economize strength*.

I. THAT THE LESS FACILITIES IN WORK, THE GREATER IS THE STRENGTH REQUIRED. "If the iron be blunt," more strength is required than if it were whetted. The woodman who has to hew the old oak with a blunt axe must throw more muscular energy into the stroke, than if his instrument were keen. In the various kinds of labor which we have to prosecute on this earth, we often find our circumstances very unfavorable, and our iron very blunt. In such cases there is a demand for extra strength on our part, if we would achieve the result we require. Solomon's principle here applies to all departments

of labor. First: *The principle applies to secular work*. The men who are placed, as the millions unfortunately are, in such temporal circumstances as seem to doom them to destitution, must, if they would overcome difficulties and rise, be strenuous in effort. Their circumstances are so unfavorable, their "iron" so "blunt," that they must put forth more strength. Society, in every age, abounds with examples where this has been done with success; where men, whose circumstances have been most unpropitious, whose iron has been most blunt, by throwing their full energy into their labor, have risen from destitution and obscurity to affluence and power. The bluntest iron in the hands of determined energy has built up many a magnificent fortune. Secondly: *This principle applies to educational work*. The circumstances in which thousands in this country are placed, are most unfavorable to mental and spiritual culture—a work of the first importance to us all. The utter neglect of the faculties in childhood and youth, the habits of

l indolence contracted, excessive hours of labor, exhaustion of energy in material drudgeries of all these are unfavorable instances for culture,

The man who is the it of such a state of , has, indeed, a "blunt" to use in the work of improvement. Still, let

it forth more "strength," e will do it. Thousands o employed the bluntest hat they have become the est lights in literature, eatest apostles in science, he most distinguished rs in art. Do not find with thy mental tools, ; man. Use the bluntest ith all thy might, and shalt rise. Thirdly :

*principle applies to us work.* Most unfavor-

re the circumstances in the millions are placed e cultivation of a truly life. Pernicious preju-received, and immoral ; contracted in early life, lly associations, and the lowed and corrupting nces that surround us hands, render the work rsonal religion terribly it. Albeit, though the "of such a man be blunt, im use it, and he will ed. Let him agonize to in at the strait gate, and all gain admission ; let wrestle like Jacob with

the contending angel, and he shall gain the conquest. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force." Do not find fault, my brother, with thy "blunt" iron. God knows all about it. Grasp it with a firm hand and an earnest soul. Kind Heaven will help thee to use it effectively. Fourthly: *This principle applies to evangelizing work.* To the Church is committed the work of extending the knowledge of Christ throughout the earth ; of making the empire of virtue, truth, and blessedness, supreme the world over. It is a great work, this. Many circumstances are most unfavorable to its accomplishment. The false religions of heathendom, which hold well-nigh three-fourths of the human population in a grasp which has been tightening for ages, and the anti-Christianity of Christendom, which go to counteract and neutralize the efforts of our missionaries on every shore, are circumstances most unpropitious to this evangelizing work. Truly, the difficulties are great, the "iron is blunt ;" and unless more strength is put forth, nothing will be done. The Church will never fell the upas with its blunt iron, unless more strength is exerted ; more strength in its faith, its prayer, its benevolence. It must

adopt the resolution of the old saint:—"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Another truth suggested by the text is—

II. THAT PRACTICAL SAGACITY IN WORK SERVES TO ECONOMIZE STRENGTH. "Wisdom is profitable to direct." There is a skill that can *whet* the iron and give a successful stroke. In truth, neither the blunted iron nor the whetted, whatever the amount of strength, will do much, without the exercise of practical sagacity. "Wisdom is profitable to direct."—First : *Strength may be saved in commercial pursuits by a wise system of management.* In entering a house of business, do not judge of the prosperity by the bustle and activity which you see. It often happens that all the fussiness and hurry and nimble movements, are the want of plan. Often in those establishments where there is no bustle, where the functionaries move about with a quiet ease and a measured step, there is a practical sagacity at the head, so directing the whole that bustle is avoided, strength is saved, and

every transaction succeeds. The presiding genius has whetted the iron and it cuts its way with ease. It is not the sweating bustler who does the most work in the world's trade ; it is the man of forecast and philosophic measures. Secondly : *Strength may be saved in governmental action by a wise policy.* This perhaps is the special reference of Solomon in these words. He had been speaking of violent acts on the part of rulers, acts by which they had invaded and violated old prescriptive rights, and that without regard to either prudence or justice. This was using a blunt tool without sagacity, and thereby exhausting the strength of the worker. The government that does not whet its policy by the great principles of justice, mercy, and peace, propounded by the great Legislator of old on the Mount, will one day exhaust its strength, and it will become financially and morally weak and prostrate. Righteousness and peace will give such an edge to the policy of a government, as will cut its bloodless way into the hearts of people and kingdoms. Thirdly : *Strength may be saved in self-improvement by a philosophic method.* A wise division of your time, a judicious selection of the most quickening and educating

a punctual, hearty, persevering application to right work at the right time will save much nervous action, and give intellectual vigor. Fourthly : *It may be saved in the policy of diffusing the Gospel by a lightened policy.* That is expressed in the mission which Christ gave to the apostles after His resurrection wherein He commands them to begin at Jerusalem ; and to be developed in the missionary efforts of the apostles. The Church in her missionary efforts been hindered by this policy, instead of the romance of sentimentalism, Christianity would occupy a very different position in the world from what it does now.

#### SECOND-HAND, AND THE FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear : but now mine eye hath seen thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. — Job. xlii. 5, 6.

the outburst of a soul in religious contact with God, its utterance recognizes old knowledge of the Father — *second-hand* and *first-hand*.

HERE IS IMPLIED A  
FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF  
"I have heard of thee

by the hearing of the ear." He had heard many people talk to each other, and to him, about God. His friends, for example, and Elihu, had said much to him about the Almighty. First : *This second-hand knowledge is very common.* All in Christendom—most, perhaps, throughout the world, who have come to years of thought—have heard something about the Supreme in some form or other. There is a deal said about Him in our age and land. Thousands upon thousands are *professionally* engaged in the work. In how many counsels from parents, conversations with friends, and sermons from ministers, have we heard of Him by the "hearing of the ear." Something about Him every day falls on the ear. Very common, indeed, is this *second-hand* knowledge. Secondly : *This second-hand knowledge is spiritually worthless.* It may serve us intellectually, by stimulating and strengthening the mental powers. It may serve us socially, by increasing the value of our society. In truth, as mere citizens of time, it may serve us in many ways ; but *spiritually*, it is without value. There is no moral virtue in it, no godly life in it. It is a visionary, not a vital thing. Its influence on the soul is that of the lunar ray, cold and

dead, rather than that of the solar beam, warm and life-giving.

II. HERE IS IMPLIED A PRIMARY KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. "Now mine eye seeth thee." The Great One came within Job's horizon. He saw Him with his own eyes, and heard Him with his own ears. First: *This primary knowledge silenced all controversy.* Job, under the influence of a second-hand knowledge, had argued long and earnestly; but as soon as he is brought face to face with his Maker, he felt Him as the greatest fact in his consciousness, and all controversy was hushed. Experimental knowledge of God disdains polemics. It is second-hand knowledge that breeds controversies. When He shows Himself to the soul, our intellectual theories of Him appear as contemptible as rushlights in the sun. Secondly: *This primary knowledge subdued all pride.* There seemed occasionally something of the high-minded and haughty in Job's discussion with his so-called friends. He seems to treat them at times with disdain. "Ye are wise men, and wisdom will die with you; but I have understanding as well as you." But no more of this when the primary knowledge came. "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Man, in

conscious contact with his Maker, has ever felt this, and must ever do so. Moses, Isaiah, Peter, Paul, John, all felt this.

Brother, hast thou this primary knowledge? Is God Himself thy teacher, or art thou living on second-hand information? Not all the stars of night can reveal the sun. If the great orb of day is to be seen, he must show himself. Not all the teachers of the universe can reveal God. If He is to be seen, He must show Himself.

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#### THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD, AND THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.

"Pulling them out of the fire."  
—Jude 23.

THE chapter from which these words are taken, challenges critical thought and is fraught with many striking and suggestive truths. Confining our attention to our text, we have two solemn subjects for consideration:—*The condition of the world,* and *The work of the Church.*

I. THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD. It is in "the fire." Sin, like fire, is found existing in two states, *latent* and *active*. Fire in its latent state permeates all nature; it is in the dust beneath our feet, in the air we breathe; it is in the sea, and in the sky; it is

in the water, and in the rock ; it sleeps in the very ice. Fire in its active state flames on your hearths, illumines your cities, works in your manufactories, draws your carriages, glows in the sun, flashes in the lightning, and thunders in the earthquake. In sin, in one of these states, latent or active, the millions of ungodly men exist. In some it is latent ; as in childhood and in those who have led a moral life. In others it is active ; as in the drunkard, the debauchee, the blasphemer, the men of rapine and of war. Sin is like fire in many respects.\* First : *In its diffusibility.* "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." It starts from its centre, and pauses not until it has touched the remotest object for which it has an affinity. Secondly : *In its transformativeness.* Fire turns everything combustible into its own nature. Thirdly : *In its separating force.* Fire is the principle in nature which counteracts attraction, and keeps the various particles of matter at a distance. Set fire to the compactest tree, or blast the firmest rock, and the atoms will be driven wide asunder. Fourthly : *In its destructiveness.* Fire, whilst it cannot destroy the essence of things, destroys their forms,

\* See "Homilist," Vol. I., New Series, p. 455.

their beauties, and their uses. Fifthly : *In its painfulness.* Fire inflicts pain. It is the element of greatest torture. It is the emblem of future punishment. Sixthly : *In its extinguishableness.* There is an element that can extinguish fire. Nature has provided a conqueror for this demon. Now, in sin, which is thus diffusive, transformative, separating, destructive, painful, and extinguishable, the ungodly world is living. What a condition ! It is the porch of hell.

II. THE WORK OF THE CHURCH. "Pulling them out." How is this to be done ? First : *Christianly.* With the Christian instrument, the Gospel ; and with the Christian inspiration, the Spirit of Christ. Philosophically, nothing else can do it. Historically, nothing else has done it. Secondly : *Promptly.* There is no time to lose. The fire is burning ; the longer they are in, the more terrible and hopeless their condition. While we speak, some are passing beyond the reach of help. Thirdly : *Earnestly.* When the house is on fire, who would pace slowly and half-heartedly to the rescue of the inhabitants ? There would be the rush of the whole heart and the full speed of the limb ; even as Æneas bore his father upon his

shoulders out of the flames of Troy, or as the angels hurried Lot from Sodom. Fourthly: *Perseveringly*. The earnestness must not be spasmodic but continuous, so long as there is one in the fire. How Christ persevered. He did not fail nor become discouraged. How Paul persevered; for three years he warned every one with tears. He was willing to spend and be spent.

#### IN DIVINE LOVE.

"Keep yourselves in the love of God."—Jude 21.

THE expression "love of God," stands for two very different things. Sometimes it stands for God's love to man. It is our happiness to know that the Infinite is not a being of mere intellect, but of emotion as well;—that He *can* love, and that He *does* love man with a love eternal, unconquerable, and compassionate. Sometimes it stands for man's love to God. It is the glory of man that he can love the Infinite, and that, in thousands of instances, he does it. This is his perfection. The latter is the idea which we attach to the words of the text; and they lead us to consider two things.

#### I. THE HIGHEST STATE OF BEING. "Love to God." (1)

Man is made for a supreme love. The deepest hunger of his being is for an object on which to place his affection. (2) Man is the creature of his supreme love. His love is the queen of his intellect, the lord of his every power. It is the impulse that sets and keeps all his faculties a-going. As are his loves, so is he. (3) The only supreme love that can perfect his being, is that which is directed towards God. First: *Supreme love to God alone can satisfy the reason*. Intellect is bound to hold, as an axiom, that He who is supremely good should be supremely loved. God is the Supremely Good. The command to love Him, with all our heart and being, is founded in the truest philosophy of human nature. Secondly: *Supreme love to God alone accords with conscience*. Conscience utters her protest against the soul giving her chief affections to any other; hence the inner contentions of the soul from age to age. This contention is the battle of the race; the battle of the centuries. Thirdly: *Supreme love to God alone fulfils the conditions of happiness*. This we have frequently shown; nor can it be too urgently enforced on the attention of the world.\*

\* See "Crisis of Being," "Philosophy of Happiness."

THE HIGHEST CONCERNING. "Keep yourselves." injunction implies—(1) ; in it. Heaven is in it. Good men on earth are in it is in truth the very essence of true religion. (2) bility of leaving it. Were no possibility of falling it, there would be no in continuing in it. ls did fall from it. So re first man. Agents and nstances on this earth constantly at work to ce men from this substate. But why try to in it? Because—First:

*the best condition for ring.* (1) It secures the *medium* of vision. The ions of the soul are the through which the soul on all outward things. are the glass through it gazes at creation and

The only affection gives it a clear atmosphere, is supreme affection od. All other affections in the glass, so darken atmosphere, that its views limited, indistinct, and ted. "He that loveth, eth God." (2) It affords best position of vision. uch in obtaining a view e landscape depends not on purity of atmosphere, the stand-point of the ver. How little your cities appear from the of some lofty mountain.

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How small the world, with all its pomps and pageantries, will appear to the soul that looks down from the love of God. It is indeed the observatory of the universe. Secondly: *It is the best condition for enjoying.* Gratitude, admiration, benevolence, are all elements of happiness, and these enter into the very nature of this love of God. Thirdly: *It is the best condition for growing.* It is just that temperature of the soul in which all the faculties can rise into their full strength and stature. Fourthly: *It is the best condition for working.* It is that which gives muscle to the soul, and makes it mighty through God.

#### FAITHFUL SAYING.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—1 Tim. i. 15.

THE truthfulness of this saying as related to its acceptance, is shown thus:—

I. ALL TRUTH IS WORTHY OF ACCEPTATION. First: *Because it gratifies man's thirst for knowledge.* "What is truth?" is the expression of a longing, which increases as it is gratified, and can never be satiated. Secondly: *Because it expands and ennobles his*



*mental nature.* God knows all things, and the more we know the nearer do we approach to Him in this aspect of His nature. Thirdly : *Because it enables him to judge more accurately in all the affairs of life.* We must know the truth before we can act the truth.

II. DIFFERENT KINDS OF TRUTH DEMAND DIFFERENT KINDS OF ACCEPTATION. First : *Theoretical truth requires only the assent of the understanding.* The theorems of Euclid excite no emotion, and lead to no course of action. Secondly : *Æsthetic truth demands more than this, viz., a corresponding emotion.* By æsthetic truth, I mean harmony, symmetry, beauty, sublimity. These are true in their adaptation to our mental nature, and the more true they are, the more they adapt themselves to our constitution ; in the same degree they call forth our admiration, wonder, pleasure, delight, ecstasy. But they go no further ; they do not excite to action. Thirdly : *Practical truth is only accepted when acted upon.* Action is the test of belief. Faith without works is dead, being alone ; as the body is dead, being alone, being separated from the soul. We cannot be said to have accepted, *e.g.*, the truth that we should love

our neighbour, unless we are ready to act upon it.

III. THE MORE COMPREHENSIVE A TRUTH, THE MORE ENTIRE IS THE ACCEPTATION IT DEMANDS. The truth of our text is worthy of *all* acceptance ; that is, as I read the text, of *all kinds of acceptance.* Because it is *all-comprehensive*, appealing to every part of man's nature, it is worthy of the reception of—First : *The intellect.* It gratifies man's thirst for knowledge. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," is the cry of the intellect, as well as of the heart. God reveals Himself in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself ; and the cry is answered. Besides, this faithful saying is in the highest sense *rational.* Because of its adaptation to human need, it is the grandest exhibition of Divine reason ; and as such, appeals to the reason of man. It transcends all reason ; and yet the reason can see in it a wondrous fitness and propriety. Philosophies, falsely so called, may sneer at its simplicity ; but it contains a philosophy which dwarfs them all. Secondly : *The feelings.* As an exhibition of *wisdom*, it is calculated to command our *admiration.* As an embodiment of the morally *sublime*, it excites our *wonder.* As the tale of the *woes of the*

*Man Christ Jesus*, it evokes our *sympathy*. As a mighty outburst of *Divine love*, it calls forth all that is *tender* and *grateful* in our nature. "We love him, because he first loved us." Thirdly : *The will*. It is essentially a *practical* truth, and is really *accepted* only when *acted upon*. To accept this faithful saying, we must not only believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, we must give to Him our *HEARTS*

and our *LIVES*. We are to "*live to him who died for us*." As the "faithful saying" appeals to every part of our nature, it is worthy of *reception* by the *intellect*, *heart*, and *will*. As it appeals so *mightily* to our nature, it is worthy of *entire, unreserved, hearty* reception ; and as it embraces the interests of all the human race, it is worthy the reception of *all men*.

CHARLES CALLAWAY, M.A.

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### CONCERNING ANECDOTES.

The critic says, "Anecdotes are among the luxuries of literature;" and he is fearful that the mind should be accustomed to them, and reject severer diet. I rejoice, however, to be informed, in the same paragraph, that "they stimulate the appetite for reading, and create it where deficient." I will not deny that anecdotes are to be placed among literary luxuries. The refinement of a nation influences the genius of its literature; we now require not only a solid repast, but a delicious dessert. A physician, austere as Hippocrates; a critic, rigid as Aristotle, are alike inimical to our refreshments. We will not be fooled into their systems. We do not dismiss our fruits and our wines from our tables; we eat, and our health remains uninjured. We read anecdotes with voluptuous delight; nor is our science impaired, or our wit

rendered less brilliant. It is not just to consider anecdotes merely as a source of entertainment; if it shall be found that they serve also for the purposes of utility, they will deserve to be classed higher in the scale of study than hitherto they have been.

History itself derives some of its most agreeable instructions from a skilful introduction of anecdotes. We should not now dwell with anxiety on a dull chronicle of the reigns of monarchs; a parish register might prove more interesting. We are not now solicitous of attending to battles, which have ceased to alarm; to sieges, which can destroy none of our towns; and to storms, which can never burst upon our shores. We turn with disgust from fictions told without the grace of fable, and from truths uninteresting as fables without grace. Our hearts have learnt to sympathise, and we con-

sult the annals of history, as a son and a brother would turn over domestic memories. We read history, not to indulge the frivolous inquisitiveness of a dull antiquary, but to explore the causes of the miseries and prosperities of our country. We are more interested in the progress of the human mind, that in that of empires. A Hearne would feel a frigid rapture, if he could discover the name of a Saxon monarch unrecorded in our annals; and of whom as little should remain as of the doubtful bones of a Saxon dug out of a tumulus. Such are his anecdotes! A Hume is only interested with those characters who have exerted themselves in the cause of humanity, and with those incidents which have subverted or established the felicities of a people.

D'ISRAELL

## A GREAT MULTITUDE A SAD SIGHT.

When Xerxes saw the whole Hellespont concealed beneath the ships, and all the coasts of Abydos full of men, he held himself happy; but soon after he burst into tears. This being observed by his paternal uncle Antabanus, he, understanding that Xerxes was shedding tears, addressed him thus:—"Sire, how very different are your present actions, and what you did erewhile! For then you declared yourself happy, and now you weep." The king answered, "Yes, for when I consider how short is human life, pity enters my heart; since of these, many as they are, every one will be dead before a hundred years."

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## Theological Notes and Queries.

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## OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

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## PROPHECY AND GOODNESS.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 19, p. 297. The case of Balaam is more remarkable than any of those you have mentioned, and it seems decisive on the point. He was covetous, and would, had he been able, have prostituted his gifts for gain. Yet he was compelled to utter Divine predictions against his will. Therefore, although what a man speaks under Divine inspiration is the authoritative Word of God, yet the fact that he has been thus inspired, does not necessarily render his ordinary course of life, or his character irreproachable.

## THE JUDGMENT DAY OF MEN AND ANGELS.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 20, p. 297. We think that such an inference is legitimate. With regard to your second question, we may refer to Matt. xxv. 41. where the fire which is everlasting, *το πῦρ το αἰώνιον*, is said to have been prepared for the devil and his angels, *ἡτοιμασμενον τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ*.

## A CHILD IN SPIRITUAL ARMOR.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 21, p. 297. The writer is here

using the figure of rhetoric, termed metaphor. From the moment that the child becomes the subject of temptation, he has access, and should have recourse, to the spiritual armory described by the apostle in Eph. vi. 11—17.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, AND THE FOURTH  
IN THE FURNACE.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST  
No. 22, p. 297. There is no article

before "son" in the original; therefore the words should be rendered, *like a son of gods, or God*. The Septuagint has, *υἱὸς θεοῦ*. Dr. Fuerst, "einem Sohne der Götter." The most general opinion is that it was an angel. Compare ver. 28; Job i. 6; ii. 1. Calmet says of the Chaldeans, "They recognized gods of different degrees, and with regard to angels they had a notion very similar."

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## Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE KEY TO THE EXERCISES CONTAINED IN THE FIRST PART OF  
DR. KALISCH'S HEBREW GRAMMAR. By the Author. London :  
Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green.

OUR opinions on the high merits of the Hebrew Grammar of Dr. Kalisch having been sufficiently expressed nearly a year ago, need not be repeated now. We will only say that Dr. K. is one of the greatest living Hebraists, and that he especially excels in profound knowledge of the text itself of the Old Testament. Every page of his grammar affords proof of this, and in this respect he is not second even to Gesenius. Those who intend learning Hebrew without a master, will find this Key particularly useful, if not indispensable. If the student has sufficient firmness to avoid an improper use of a Key, its legitimate use, which is to assure of correctness when he has done his best, answers a very desirable purpose. Our readers will remember that we deplored the more than usual number of errata by which the grammar is disfigured, and its usefulness hindered. We are happy to say that that evil is partially remedied in this volume by a page of corrections. Much more, however, needs to be done, ere the unaided student can use the book with full satisfaction.

THE MOSAIC ORIGIN OF THE PENTATEUCH CONSIDERED. By a Layman  
of the Church of England. London : William Sheffington.

THE three propositions that Colenso endeavors to establish in his notorious work are—(1) That the Pentateuch is a *compilation*, the work

of several authors, living at very various ages, and not—as is commonly believed—the production of a single man. (2) That the *earliest* of these authors was probably the prophet Samuel; the *latest*, probably the prophet Jeremiah. (3) That the object of the writers was not to hand down an authentic history, either of the events narrated or the laws connected with them, but merely to convey religious *Truth* to the people of their *own time*, in the form most calculated to produce a deep and lasting impression; in which Truth, accordingly, consists the whole value of their writings. These propositions, the author of this work examines and refutes. Of the many who have stood up to answer the bishop, few, if any, have spoken with so much honorable candor, thorough scholarship, and ardor.

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THE GOSPEL OF COMMON SENSE; OR, MENTAL, MORAL, AND SOCIAL SCIENCE, IN HARMONY WITH SCRIPTURAL CHRISTIANITY. By ROBERT BROWN, Author of "The Philosophy of Evangelicism," &c. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

WE have no knowledge of Mr. Brown beyond what we have drawn from his book; but we have no hesitation in saying that he is a true thinker. Without adopting all his opinions, we think that converse with his vigorous thoughts is calculated to prove of essential service to very many. Some of his expressions appear to us to be incorrect; as, for instance, when he says, that "guilt is our normal condition." But some are worthy of being written in golden characters. Take, for instance, the following:—"One of the common missiles thrown against advanced religious thought, is to charge it with novelty. But there are two kinds of novelty. There is a novelty which merely restores to its ancient beauty what has been defaced by comparatively recent innovation. Of this, the history of our Church architecture affords not a few striking examples. And were our Church creeds to be submitted to a similar searching scrutiny, it would be found that, beneath the lath and plaster of modern re-construction, there lies concealed a simple grandeur, the discovery and exhibition of which, better than all labored defences, would erect a bulwark against the attacks of scepticism, and advance Christian truth."

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ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE. A Biblical Portrait and a Mirror of the Manifold Grace of God. By W. F. BESSER, D.D. Translated by FREDERIC BULTMANN. With an Introductory Notice by REV. J. S. HOWSON, D.D. London: James Nisbet & Co.

THIS book is written by a German Doctor of Divinity, translated by a Church of England Missionary, introduced by another Doctor of Divinity, and dedicated to a fourth, who is Bachelor of Divinity, Prebendary of St. Paul's, and Hon. Sec. of the Church Missionary Society. Perhaps

should have liked better to see the book thrown on its own merits, and ushered in with such an overpowering flourish of trumpets. And this flourish was rendered especially unnecessary by the fact that the work itself is sufficiently remarkable to draw on it wide attention, and enough of vitality to secure its safety. The history of St. Paul is carefully, but not drily expounded, and is made the text of a very warm and lively running comment. The book deserves the popularity which it will doubtless attain, since it is adapted for usefulness to a very large class.

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CONVERSION: THE DANGER OF DELAYING IT. From the French of  
REV. JAMES SAURIN. A new Translation, with Introductory Memoir.  
By JOHN S. GIBB, F.S.E.I. London: James Nisbet & Co.

SAURIN'S sermons are too well known to require introduction to our readers. These are three of the most powerful. The translation is faithful and idiomatic. The Memoir occupies twenty-four pages, and is interesting. The little volume is elegantly "got up."

---

WORK AND PLAY. By HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D., Author of "The New Life," "Nature and the Supernatural," &c. London: Alexander Strahan & Co.

MR. BUSHNELL is one of the first of American thinkers. His great powers are not cramped, like Emerson's, by an obstinate self-exclusion from the Christian region of truth, but are permitted wide and free play. The result is admirable. This is a volume of essays, eight in number, which are remarkable for intellectual vigor, and force, and beauty of expression.

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CARIBALDI: HIS ENTRANCE INTO LONDON. A Sermon for the Working Men of England. By R. E. FORSAITH. London: Passmore & Alabaster. Mr. Forsaith's Sermon is characterized by remarkable ability and vivacity, and ought to circulate by thousands amongst working men. THE PARABLE OF THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY. A Sermon preached in St. Stephen's Church, Paddington. By REV. CHARLES SHAKESPEARE, of Trinity College, Dublin. London (Bayswater): J. C. Cribb. Mr. Shakespeare well brings out the sense and practical reference of an important and beautiful, though neglected passage of Scripture. His Sermon was published at the request of those who heard it, and is well calculated for usefulness to Christian parents, teachers, and ministers of the Word. LAST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE PENTATEUCH. For the Use of Children. By a Lady. London: William Macintosh. The conception of this little book is good, but the execution is not equal to the plan. SURE OF HEAVEN. A Book for the Doubting and Anxious. By THOMAS HILLS. A New Edition. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co. This has either the clearness of view nor the perspicuity of expression which are

indispensable in books of experimental religion intended for general circulation. **THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.** A Refutation of the Views generally held by the Christians commonly called "Plymouth Brethren" on that subject. London: Elliot Stock. It seems that there has been a stupendous theological war raging for a considerable period without the circle of our limited knowledge. The writer of this work evidently thinks that his opponent ought now to submit. If his views are what they are here represented, we think that the world would lose nothing by his silence. **THE STORY OF CAREY, MARSHMAN, AND WARD, THE SERAMPORE MISSIONARIES.** By JOHN CLARK MARSHMAN. London: Alexander Strahan & Co. An important chapter of Church History is here written in an interesting and we doubt not faithful manner. Here and there condensation might have been an improvement, but on the whole the book is readable, as well as judicious, and we cordially wish it a wide circulation. **AONIO PALEARIO.** A Chapter in the History of the Italian Reformation. From the French of M. BONNET. London: Religious Tract Society. Paleario was a native of Rome, and an eminent scholar at the time of the revival of learning. He advanced doctrines resembling those of Luther, and suffered death as a heretic in 1570. The memoir is written with considerable vivacity and Protestant zeal. We should have liked a refutation of the common allegation that Paleario retracted before his death. **REST UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE GREAT ROCK.** A Book of Facts and Principles. By REV. JOHN KENNEDY, M.A., F.R.G.S. London: Religious Tract Society. This volume contains a good deal of practical religious matter, not, however, of the highest order. The main current of the writing flows somewhat wearisomely by, but this the reader can easily escape by skipping it in favor of the anecdotes which are plentifully intersperst. **UPLIFTINGS OF THE SOUL TO ITS GOD.** By NAPOLEON ROUSSEL, Pasteur. Translated from the French. With a Preface by FREDERIC CHALMERS, B.D., Rector of Beckenham. London: James Nisbet & Co. This book of devotion is not only approved of by the translator, but by his venerable relative, the well-known Dr. Marsh. After this, it is unnecessary for us to say that many pious persons might derive from it valuable assistance. **HUMAN SADNESS.** By the COUNTESS DE GASPARIN, Author of "The Near and the Heavenly Horizons." London: Alexander Strahan & Co. As might be expected, the style of this book has considerable elegance. Along with much really valuable matter, there is a measure of sentimentalism, which, to us, is sometimes surprising, but seldom pleasing.

# THE HOMILIST.

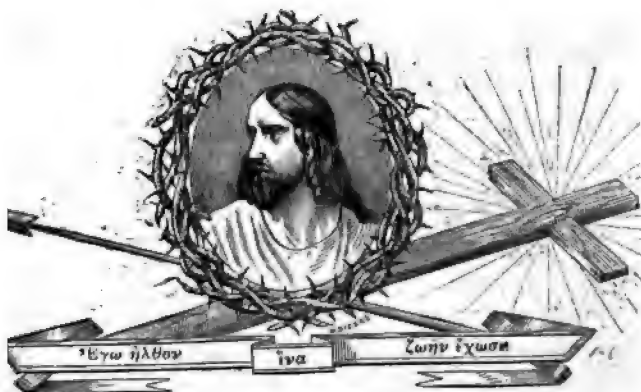
CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

FOR OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "CRISIS OF BEING," "CORE OF  
CREEDS," "PROGRESS OF BEING," "RESURRECTIONS," &C., &C.

VOL. IV. THIRD SERIES.

VOLUME IV. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



"THE LETTER KILLETH BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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THIS Volume is the fourth of the *Third Series* of the work. The only difference between this and the preceding series, consists in its enlarged size and half-yearly issue.

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the "Homilist," and no new specific description is requisite, the fourteen-years-old preface may be again transcribed.

"First: The book has no *finish*. The Editor has not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly, but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented 'germs,' which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

"Secondly: The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to '*our* body,' or to '*our* Church.' As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the 'Homilist' to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

"Thirdly: The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which

iv.

constitute what is called the 'orthodox creed'—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently, to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, 'Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.'

"The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the 'last day' prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the 'Homilist' did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavors to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!"

DAVID THOMAS.

*Loughborough Park,  
Brixton.*

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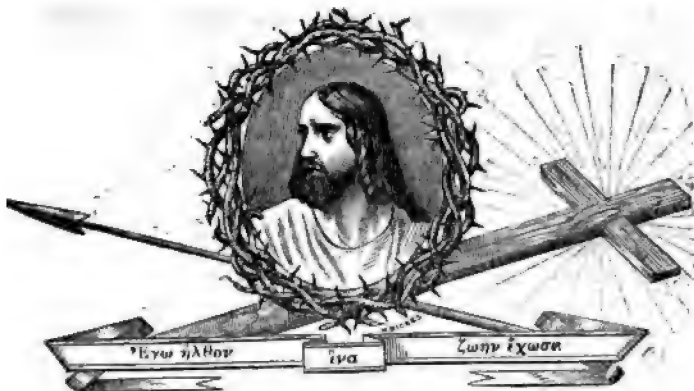
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Acts	8	26—40	316	2 Peter	2	20	50
Acts	11	23	291	Rev.	7	1—3	134
Acts	13	46	292	Rev.	14	13	83
Acts	14	22	294	Rev.	15	3	20
Rom.	6	22	39				







"The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."—PAUL.

# A HOMILY

ON

## God's Everlasting Salvation.

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath : for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner : but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."—Isa. li. 6.



THESE words are designed to bring comfort to God's people. They are, in numbers, and seemingly in influence, in the minority, and their opinion is but the opinion of the minority. They believe that the only true, great, and lasting thing in the world is God's salvation ; but there is the decided opinion of an overwhelming majority against them. The world, by its beliefs and practice, says, that the interests of the soul are the most unimportant affairs in the earth. Nearly everybody looks after everything else than those interests. Most people know of God's righteousness in

scarcely any other way than by name, and little or no attention is given by the mass of people to such subjects. What God does for and in man, are things which only a very small part of the world's inhabitants care to think about; and even they often show that the subject has but little interest even to them. The world, as a whole, attaches extremely little importance to Christ's saving process in the soul.

The best among us cannot meet these facts day by day without being influenced by them, and the influence is anything but salutary. It suggests to us the thought, that we may have been using the microscope on that subject, thereby giving it a magnitude it does not possess. Or, if doubt is not raised, despondency and gloom are sure to overcast our spirits. Left to ourselves, or what is as bad, left to the teaching of the world, we see our religious realities becoming faded and dim—our bright hopes of the future assuming a faintness and insignificance which fills us with alarm.

Out of the demeaning and falsifying atmosphere which thus surrounds and threatens to overwhelm us, does God summon us. He commands us to leave the petty judgments and opinions of men far behind; to let our souls taste a little of the grandeur and greatness of starry heavens and wide-spreading earth; to consider that salvation and righteousness are not of the earth, earthy, but have sprung from the source out of which have flowed earth, seas, and skies. Nay, that the fountain of salvation is deeper and more enduring than that of the firm earth and unchanging heavens; that when the pillars of this earthly platform have become so rotten that men can no longer walk thereon; when earth's stage shall fall in one tremendous crash; when the fire of mid-day sun shall be exhausted, and heaven's night-lights shall be extinguished; when nothing remains of the old universe but a faint remnant of the smoke of its destruction;—then shall be shining in unimpaired brilliancy, the righteous God and His saved people. "Lift up," &c.

Refreshing it is to hear God's voice—clear and distinct—breaking through the confusing din of the world's opinions

and practices, announcing the true position of His Gospel here and hereafter ; that it is not of the world, depends not on the world, and shall exist when the world has passed away. God's salvation and righteousness are independent of everything in the world, and everything of the world.

There are brought before us in the text, three great varieties of existence, viz., those of *man*, the *earth*, and the *starry heavens* ; and contrasted with *God's salvation and righteousness*.

I. GOD'S SALVATION IS INDEPENDENT OF, AND WILL OUT-LIVE, EVERYTHING HUMAN. "When they that dwell therein shall die in like manner," i.e., like the old earth itself. "My salvation shall be for ever." Men have got the notion that religion dies with them. Now, with many things that are connected with religion man has much to do. A great and indispensable work he has to perform, but it is a subordinate one. In the march through the desert, he has upon his shoulders the whole care of the tabernacle and its furniture. Whether it is to be in good or bad repair depends upon him. It cannot be shifted from place to place without much labor on his part, and he must work hard in taking it down and building it up, when and where commanded. The whole means of religious services depend upon him and his punctuality and care. But that is all. The meaning and life of the whole lies far beyond his sphere. That which gives stability to the whole edifice, can neither be taken down nor put up by him ; can be neither revealed nor obscured by him. No, for over the heads of priests and Levites, shines the bright presence of Jehovah,—bright when all is dark, or clothed in sombre purple—gliding noiselessly through the calm blue heavens.

Still does the living presence of God's redeeming power float through this world ; still does it seek the co-operation of men, in seeking for it temples, even human hearts, to dwell in. But under the control of man it can never be ; never will it move according to his whims and fancies.

Strange that men should be found to suppose so ; to suppose that the power of God could be locked and sealed in their ecclesiastical communion, or found only according to the square or plumb of their theological dogmas ; that He who never dwelt exclusively in houses made with hands, can now be pressed within the narrow bounds of a sect or creed. Yet much like this has been the conduct of men. They have done so not out of any evil intention ; rather I imagine with the best intentions. Christianity was not very old, when many of its true disciples thought that, because a few hooks of the tabernacle's curtaining were getting loose, the Shekinah was in danger. Church councils were convened, rigid ecclesiastical formulas were concocted, solemn censures were passed upon all who refused to look after the pins of those curtains ; and all to save the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Then sects arose, each with a different number of golden tacks, or perhaps, outer court posts in its construction ; each charging the other with the want of true religion on account of the said differences. Each forgot, that the free spirit of God stood above and rested upon one and all ; that down upon all their tabernacles the living light of God was shining.

And shine on it would, let men do what they might. Not even upon its most ardent supporters does it depend. We too often yield to the opinion that when this good man, or that clever theologian passes away—that when this zealous party, or that evangelical sect fades and dies, that God's true and powerful presence will be no more seen. How mistaken we are ! How jealous was Moses of the sanctity of Jehovah's presence. Yet Moses passed away, but God's presence was still as sacred. How zealous was Aaron for the holy worship of the sanctuary. Yet the worship remained when Aaron died. Even that tabernacle, where alone it was thought God could be served, passed away ; still shone His presence, and that, too, in a grander house at Jerusalem. And when the great temple itself crumbled to the ground, and men wondered if the Divine presence and power were no more, behold it shone with a new brilliance in a grander temple—His own Son.

Men have too often been faint-hearted for the safety of vital religion. If by true religion they mean this or that human scheme or system of opinions, they have reason to be so ; for let them be assured it shall pass away. But if you look beyond what is human, and have the simple belief that there is such a thing as God's own truth, power, and life, then bid hence doubts and fears. Human theories and Church forms will fade, will pass away ; but God's redeeming mercy will remain in all its purity and power.

Not only is the power of God unto salvation independent of its friends, but unconquerable by its foes. Men have tried to oppose the march of God's kingdom upon earth. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed." All they did was to frighten the poor Churches of those days—possibly purge them a little ; for people sought the peace of the Gospel then and after, as much as ever. Then intellectual power tried to turn the truth of God into a lie, played for a while at word-juggling, and spread consternation among a few of the more faint-hearted. Yet the word of Christ lives to-day ; and all that the world knows of these gymnasts, is a few of their tricks which the pages of history have recorded. In their day, they were looked upon as mighty foes and bold destroyers, just as a few of the theories and opinions of the present are thought to endanger the vitality of salvation. Oh ! it is time we had faith in God and His work. Let men "play their fantastic tricks" in or out of religion ; they will do no harm. In a few years they and their tricks will have passed away, and the love of Jesus Christ and the power of God will be ever the same. Men and their opinions grow and decay like the trees of the forest, rise and fall like the tides of the ocean, and the old earth ever remains ; much more the righteousness of God. "All flesh"—its whole paraphernalia, its ways, its thoughts, its loves, its hates—"is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away ; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever."



II. THE GRASS WITHERETH, THE FLOWER FADETH ; AND SO, TOO, WILL THE EARTH OUT OF WHICH THEY SPRING. It "shall wax old like a garment." To the same intent speaks science. The earth has grown like everything else. It, too, shall reach a point of maturity and then slowly descend the path of decay. When we consider how intimately the Christian religion is connected with the events, the places, the form, the history of this earth, we become somewhat curious to know if the two will share the same fate. So intimately connected are they that the one was made for the other. We are told that not only were all things made by Jesus Christ, but also for Him. This earthly scene was planned and decorated, to show through His a Father's sacrificing love. Accordingly, He wove into His whole teaching the facts of nature and the events of society. He made nature speak much of the message He had to bring to man. The lily as it nodded in the breeze ; the sower as he scattered the grain ; the sheep browsing on the hill-side, and the net of the fisher on the sea-shore, uttered each its own part of His message. The fierce hurricane of midnight and the thunder-storm of mid-day also told for Jesus Christ their tale to the world. So much so, that up to the present day almost all our religion seems to be inextricably interwoven with surrounding nature. We have often to go there for testimonies to its genuineness, for explanation of its truths, and for application of its doctrines.

But the time will come when this earth "shall wax old like a garment." Will religion wax old too ? When the aged planet's voice is low and indistinct, will the truth of God also be less clear and defined ? When the old earth can no longer yield fair lilies, nor even thirty-fold to the sower ; when all its works, instead of showing order and harmony, look worn and used-up ; the machinery working slower and signs of dissolution multiplying ; when its lessons are no longer true and its instructions no longer edifying ; when this part of God's revelation becomes lame and useless—will His truth have become any more obscure or His Gospel more

unintelligible? I trow not. The world, in its youth and beauty, was but a great symbol. The symbol is gone; the truth remains. Already, men are telling us that the earth is not what it was once thought to be; that there was no universal flood; that it was not created in six days; that it is more than six thousand years old. Be it so. These are only a few details about the coat of many colors—they touch not the living heart beneath. Let that many colored symbol fade and pass away, yet the great spiritual life that dwelt beneath throbs strong as ever.

The time may come when the resources of earth may be dried up; not so the resources of Heaven. There may be no sunshine to cheer the earth; there will be sunshine for the hearts of men;—no dew to refresh a thirsty earth; there will be life-giving dew for the soul of man. Earth may have lost her scenes of beauty and places of delight; but for the weary son of man, there will be the unfading glory and charms of the Son of God.

Let the last day come, with its weapons of destruction to toss aside the old earth and all that is upon it. Let its death-throes shake to the foundations every house of prayer, every benevolent institution, every edifice that has been raised by enterprise for Christian objects. Let tract societies, Bible societies, missionary societies, all be swept away with the besom of destruction, and all religious books sent up in one great flame. Let the last day come, when never more shall be heard the chime of the Sabbath bell; when the last word of the preacher shall have been uttered, and the last Sabbath spent; when all creeds, all sects, all theologies are at an end; when the wondrous land on which a Redeemer's feet trod is no more; no Bethlehem, no Jerusalem, no Calvary. Yet that, of which all these were but the outer covering, still exists; that, for which all Christian institutions were reared, for which the Sabbath bell chimed, of which the preacher spoke, upon which all creeds and beliefs were founded—the salvation of men through Jesus Christ, shines brighter than ever. Draw aside the curtain, and as far as the eye can reach, you behold a multitude which no man can number—

the redeemed children of the old earth. There, too, is the heavenly and eternal Jerusalem ; there is the Babe of Bethlehem and the Lamb of Calvary in the midst. Let the old rag of a tattered earth fly now, at its will, through space. Its work is done. Upon its platform hath God redeemed His people, and they reign kings and priests for ever.

III. OVER THE WHOLE EARTH BROODS THE MIGHTY LAW OF CHANGE. Everywhere there are births and dissolutions. Almost everything yields to its power. From the tiny flower, to the huge mountain ; from the life of the insect that is born and dies in a day, to the life of men, of nations, of the whole world. The dominion of the changeable, however, is not confined to this world ; it extends to all worlds. Like a huge, universal canker, it makes blots on the brightest suns, unfixes fixed stars, and in its slow march, through incalculable myriads of ages, shall extinguish one by one those countless lights of the midnight firmament. The time will come when not only the earth but the heavens shall grow old ; when the celestial fires shall burn more dimly ; when system after system shall pass away ; when throughout the great firmament there shall be seen no longer the endless array of the sparkling gems of countless worlds, only a little far-off smoke, or a few faint streaks of the dying embers of a dead universe.

And why should it remain any longer when a grander universe has begun ? The work of the old one is done. It came into being only to speak the great truths of God. It has done so ; let it pass. Its bright suns, the centres of life and light, all spoke of one Eternal Sun from whom comes all life and all light. Its planets, each in its appointed orbit, each with its own work to do, each with its own size and form, each depending upon the one centre, all sung of the true life of man, that its course is only along one path, and that path only and always around one centre. The old universe came speaking of better things to come. Its fading glory spoke of an eternal glory ; its changing light of an unchanging light ; its meagre life of a fulness of life. But now, *that* glory is attained, *that* light now shines ; *that*

life now lives. The scattered, wandering sons of earth have all come back to their centre—all revolve in a true orbit. Let the changing, decaying systems of the old universe now disappear ; their existence would be but a mockery beside the one everlasting system of Righteousness. Let all that must pass away now pass. The watchword is, "For ever and ever," for ever one system, one will, one obedience, one atmosphere of love.

"Unto what," said our Lord, "shall we liken the kingdom of God ?" Unto a grain of mustard seed put into the earth. The least of all seeds, it groweth up the greatest of all herbs. I know not what could have had a smaller beginning, or to the eye of man a meaner origin than the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon earth—the least of all seeds planted. But it has grown ; it still struggles to grow in your hearts, in the heart of the world. It shall grow and live to tower above and beyond the world ; to grow when all things else fade ; to flourish in perennial beauty when all things else are crushed in the grasp of death.

There is in every one a desire to have a part in that immortality ; a desire to be connected with that strong arm that can raise him safe out of the wrecks of ages. When it utters itself in your heart, do not crush it down. It is the still small voice of your immortal spirit telling you that it is not connected with the passing things of earth, but with that righteousness and salvation which shall outlive them all. To give you that germ of immortality has Jesus Christ come. Accept of the salvation He offers you, and you will then have implanted within you God's righteousness, which will be a light to guide you in this dark world ; an ark of safety when the last flood of destruction envelopes the earth ; an everlasting rock in the presence of God, where you may repose in peace and safety for ever.\*

DAVID JOHNSON, M.A.

\* This Sermon was delivered in the ordinary course of the ministry of the late gifted Pastor of Castle Street Congregational Church, Dundee. He died at the early age of twenty-five, but has left proofs of his success as a student and of his high qualifications to do service to the Christian Church.

# A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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## SECTION ELEVENTH.—Acts iv. 1—22.

"And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day : for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed ; and the number of the men was about five thousand. And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this ? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole ; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled ; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men ? for that indeed a notable

miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem ; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people : for all men glorified God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed."—Acts iv. 1—22.

SUBJECT:—*The Miracle at "The Beautiful Gate," a Fact, a Text, and an Epoch.*

(Continued from page 322, Vol. XIV.)

**T**HIS first miracle, wrought by the apostles within the precincts of the temple, we have already noticed as a *fact*, and as a *text*. We have now to consider it as an *EPOCH*. The discourse which Peter delivered upon it as a text, woke impulses and started efforts both amongst the adherents and opponents of the new religion, that introduced, in some respects, a new order of things. It led to the first assault upon the Christian Church ; it brought the new faith into a violent conflict with the formalism of the Pharisee, the infidelity of the Sadducee, and the craft of priestly rule ; and thus demonstrated its power to battle successfully with all the evils it is missioned to destroy. In looking at it as an epoch, we discover two things :—*A new impulse to the world's antagonism to Christianity, and a new demonstration of God's power in Christianity.*

I. A NEW IMPULSE TO THE WORLD'S ANTAGONISM TO CHRISTIANITY. Observe three things :—

First : The *representatives* of the antagonism. Who were those who now stood forward as the representatives of the world against the Church—as the defenders of the false in theory, and the corrupt in practice ? The first verse answers the question. "The priests, and the captain of the temple,

and the Sadducees." The first represent religion, the second government, the third scepticism. Here you have, therefore, religion, politics, and infidelity, coming forth to crush the young Church. The hostile sections of a wicked world are every ready to merge their differences in an attack upon the divinely pure and good. Pilate and Herod become friends in their endeavor to crush the Divine. Observe—

Secondly: The *reason* of this antagonism. What roused this opposition? The second verse furnishes the reply. "Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Bengel and others see different motives at work in these assailants. The priests were "grieved," because these apostles should presume to teach, and thus arrogate their peculiar office. The captain of the temple was "grieved," because social tranquillity was disturbed and the public peace in danger. The Sadducees were "grieved," because they proclaimed a resurrection of the dead, a dogma which they repudiated. Wicked men hate truth for different reasons, and according to their passions and interests. Observe—

Thirdly: The *development* of this antagonism. The persecutors do three things. (1) They *imprison* the apostles. "And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide." It would seem that it was too late in the day to hold a court in order formally to try their conduct. It was, perhaps, if not unlawful, inconvenient to assemble the Sanhedrim at such a late hour in the day. They were, therefore, put in safe keeping until the morning. So strong had the feeling of hostility to the teachings of these apostles and dread of their influence grown in all classes, that they could not wait until the morning. Their endurance was exhausted; and they seized the apostles at once, dragged them from their sphere of influence, deprived them of their liberty, and confined them in prison during the night. (2) They *arraigned* the apostles. "And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest," &c. The word

"rulers" is, perhaps, to be taken in a generic sense, comprehending both the elders and the scribes—the one class distinguished by the dignity of age, and the other by that of occupation as transcribers and interpreters of the Jewish law. The Sanhedrim consisted of about seventy members, and before them the apostles were now brought. Some of their names are here mentioned. "Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest." Though Caiaphas was actually the high priest, yet it is probable that Annas, on account of his having occupied that position for a considerable time, and by reason of his age, and the fact of his having had several of his sons in that lofty position, was now called upon to act in that capacity, and sat as president of the court. The form in which the Sanhedrim sat, was that of a semi-circle; the president, the high priest, at the head. Now the apostles were set in the "midst" of them, that is—in the area surrounded by the seats of the members. There they stand, and the question is put to them—"By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" The question assumes their belief in the miracle. The fact that a miracle had been wrought in the man, was beyond all dispute. Their question was, with what power they did it. The conclusion which they undoubtedly sought to reach was, that it was by some diabolical influence. Probably they expected that the two poor, unlearned Galileans would be intimidated by such a question as they stood in the presence of such an august assembly. Though this question is all that they are reported to have addressed to the apostles, it is probable that much more was said on the occasion. Peter's reply, which we shall notice in the sequel, seems to have silenced and confounded them. (3) They *threatened* the apostles. "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." Their command, we may rest assured, was enforced by many a terrible threat. Imprisonment, torture, and death, were, in all probability, held forth to their view as the results of disobedience.



Such, in brief, is the reported antagonism which Peter's discourse upon this miracle awoke against himself and colleague. It was strong in its spirit, but futile in its efforts. In sooth, all endeavors to crush truth are vain, fruitless, and self-confounding.

"Truth, crush'd to earth, shall rise again ;  
The eternal years of God are hers.  
While Error, wounded, writhes in pain,  
And dies amidst her worshippers."

II. A NEW DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S POWER IN CHRISTIANITY. The fierce opposition, instead of retarding the progress of Christianity, quickens its speed ; instead of enfeebling its energy, evolves its victorious powers. We see its power here—

First: *In multiplying its adherents.* "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed ; and the number of the men was about five thousand." "Howbeit ;"—*notwithstanding* the persecution, the Divine cause advanced. Though the clouds gather and thicken into blackness, the sun rises. The tides flow, though the force of the mightiest tempest bears against them ; and God's truth moves on to universal empire, though earth and hell combine against it. "Howbeit"—*because*, not only despite the persecution did many which heard the word believe, but perhaps *because* of it. Persecution does two things which give an impulse to the cause of the Christian martyr. It presents on the one side such a hideous manifestation of evil as produces a social recoil, and on the other such an exhibition of Christian goodness in the spirit and conduct of the sufferers as awakens social sympathy and admiration. As the aromatic plant sends forth its sweetest odours by pressure, so the Christian character gains charm by its suffering. As the stars can only shine in the night, so the brightest virtues can only shine in trial. In this way, the blood of the martyr has often been the seed of the Church. We see its power here—

Secondly: *In strengthening its advocates.* With what a sublime power did it invest the apostles on this occasion ? A power which enabled them heroically to expound their

cause, thoroughly confound their enemies, and invincibly pursue their mission. They *heroically* expound their cause. They stand as prisoners in the midst of this august assembly—the great council of the nation—and the question is put to them, “By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” and instead of being overawed or intimidated, Peter stands forth, “filled with the Holy Ghost,” and addresses them with a heroism more than human. “Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole ; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” In this short address, he states three things that were adapted and undoubtedly intended to awaken within them the profoundest moral concern. (1) That the said miracle was wrought by Him whom they had crucified. “*Jesus Christ of Nazareth*,” a name which you despise, as if Peter had said, and whom ye crucified, is the name of Him by whom this wonder is effected. (2) That He whom they had crucified had become pre-eminent in the universe. “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.” Peter borrows his words from Psalm cxviii. 22. They were the professed builders of the great temple of religion, but the chief stone for the building they had rejected. This was their folly and their crime. What they had rejected God had honored. Observe—(1) That men in their enterprises often reject the Divine. (2) That though they reject the Divine, the Divine shall be honored at last to their confusion. (3) That He whom they had crucified was the only One that could save them. “Neither is there salvation in any other.” They needed salvation. Salvation

could be obtained through Christ *exclusively*. Such is the substance of Peter's address to this august assembly, his judges. It contains no word of apology, no hint of conciliation. He does not crouch as a menial before his master, or as a culprit before the administrators of justice. Nay, he offers no word of defence for himself; but with a clearness that could not be mistaken, and a directness that could not be evaded, he charges on them, his judges, the greatest crime that had ever been committed. In that court he stands clothed with the power of God. We see its power—

Thirdly: *In confounding its enemies*. Four effects seem to have been produced upon the enemies.

First: *They were astonished*. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." They marvelled at the "boldness," that is, the *fluency* or ready utterance of these men, for such is the meaning of the word translated "boldness." It is true they were brave in speaking such things on such an occasion; but the fluent way in which such men on this occasion spoke, struck their hearers with amazement. Instead of a nervous hesitancy in their speech, there was a bold flow of language. Two things would heighten their astonishment. (1) The intellectual and social position of the men. "They perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men." An unhappy translation, this, (*αγράμματοι*) *illiterate*, uneducated in that Rabbinical knowledge which the Jews regarded as the most important; (*ιδιωται*) men in a private station, without professional knowledge.\* These men had the instincts of the pedant. Pedants in every age, consider those illiterate that do not know exactly that branch of learning in which they pride themselves. The linguist regards that man as illiterate who understands not the languages he does, though he may know a hundred times as much of God's universe as he. Peter and John were not up in Rabbinical law, but they had a

\* Webster and Wilkinson.

far deeper knowledge of the government of God than the most learned of the Rabbis. The men who delivered such speeches and wrote such letters as did Peter and John, were no illiterate men. They had not received, it is true, the education of sophists and casuists, but they had received the teachings of Christ. Nor were they "ignorant." The word "ignorant," should have been rendered "common men," "laymen." The astonishment was, that those apostles who had never graduated in their schools, and who sustained no office in their institutions, but were private men, should speak with such fluency and force. The other thing that heightened their astonishment was—(2) The connection of the men with Christ. "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." They recognized them as those who had been with Jesus, as His companions and disciples. This would only heighten their astonishment; for how could they understand that men who had been the companions of Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter's son, the blasphemer, the malefactor, who had been crucified as a public offender, could speak in this way.

Secondly: *They were silenced.* "And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." Facts are stubborn things. There was the man who had been a cripple for forty years, standing side by side with the apostles, vigorous in body and with full use of limb. There was the fact in all its reality before them. What could they say? There was no denying it! The way to silence the enemies of Christianity is not by endeavouring to expose the fallacy of their objections, and logically involve them in absurdity, nor by declaring with a pious horror against their infidelities, but by presenting to them the triumphs that Christianity has achieved, show them the facts. Show them the morally blind who have been made to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk—show them the moral cripples that have been restored;—this will silence them.

Thirdly: *They were perplexed.* They felt that something must be done to prevent the influence of these apostles

spreading, and thus undermining their authority, and shaking the conventional faith. "But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." Everything recorded in these words shows their perplexity. They were at their wits' end. (1) They command the apostles "to go aside out of the council." (2) They then confer "among themselves," as to what is to be done. (3) They then resolve to "threaten them." (4) They then command the apostles "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." What a humiliating position for the great council of the nation to be placed in! What a sight. Seventy at least of a nation's magnates and magistrates, confounded by two poor men whom they considered illiterate and ignorant! It is Heaven's eternal law that the men who perversely struggle against the truth, shall involve themselves in inextricable bewilderments.

Fourthly: *They were thwarted.* "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done." The address of Peter and John at this point involves three grand truths—(1) That the will of God is the imperial rule of life. The rule is to obey God rather than man, in any capacity, or under any circumstance—man, either as a parent, a prince, monarch, or emperor. God's will is above the united will of nations, or hierarchies, or worlds. (2) That universal conscience gives its sanction to the supreme law. "Judge ye." The apostle felt that

his judges, one-sided, prejudiced, and corrupt as they were, had still within them that conscience that would compel them to the truth that God was to be obeyed rather than man. How beautifully Socrates is supposed to express this: "You, O Athenians, I embrace and love; but I will obey God more than you." (3) That Gospel truth, when truly felt in the soul, is an irrepressible force. "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Men may repress mathematical doctrines, and truths of natural and abstract science, but such is the relation of Gospel truth to the profoundest sympathies of the human heart, to the most vital interests of the human soul, that when they are truly felt, they must find utterance; "Necessity is laid upon me," says Paul.

The Sanhedrim, having heard this address of wondrous point and power, felt themselves powerless in their endeavor to crush the apostles. "So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done." They could not *punish* them, either because their consciences had been so touched by the address that they were self-prevented, or because the people were so thoroughly in sympathy with their work, that they were afraid to punish lest they should awaken public indignation. The latter reason is assigned; perhaps both operated. Anyhow, the Sanhedrim was so far thwarted. Truth ever has, and always will, thwart the purposes of its opponents.

In conclusion, two remarkable things should be, perhaps, hastily noticed before closing this section of apostolic history.

First: *The wonderful improvement in the character of Peter.* A few weeks before this, we find this Peter close to the spot in which he now stood, and in the hearing of the very men whom he now confronted,—with a base cowardice, denying all knowledge of the Son of God; but now he is invincible. The enemies of Christ he looks in the eye, he addresses, he charges with crime, with a courage that is unconquerable and majestic. How this change—this rapid improvement? He has been

thrown upon his own resources ; he has been studying the Scriptures in the light of Christ's history ; he has been earnest in prayer ; and he has received the Holy Ghost. His present position shows the truth of what Christ had taught, that "it was expedient for him that he should go away." The other remarkable thing which deserves notice here, is—

Secondly : *The difference in the effect of Peter's discourse on this occasion to that which took place under his sermon on the day of Pentecost.* Under his discourse on the day of Pentecost, which occurred just before, multitudes were pricked to the heart, and thousands were converted to God ; but no such effect as this seems to have taken place under the discourses which he delivered on the occasion of this miracle. The same facts are stated, the same truths are brought forth, with the same burning fervor and unflinching fidelity, and yet there is no record of one conversion. There is wonder and perplexity, and that is all ; no repentance. Why the difference ? May not the cause be found in the different character of the audiences ?

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## Germs of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*The Rectitude of God.*

"Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."—Rev. xv. 3.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-fourth.

**G**OD is righteous. The text is a jubilant testimony of the redeemed in heaven to the righteousness of God.

I. THE DEMANDS OF HIS LAW ATTEST THE TRUTH OF THIS TESTIMONY. The Heavenly Teacher has reduced all the demands which the Eternal Governor makes upon us, to a twofold command.

First: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,*" &c. His demand is our supreme love. Is this demand *just*? This depends upon three things. (1) Whether we have the power of loving anyone supremely. (2) Whether God has attributes adapted to awaken this love within us. (3) Whether these attributes are revealed with sufficient clearness to our minds. The affirmative to these things must be admitted by all. All men do love some object supremely. The Eternal has attributes suited to call forth the paramount affection. Nature and the Bible radiate those attributes in every variety of aspect and attraction. The Heavenly Teacher has reduced the demands to another command—

Secondly: "*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you.*" Not "*whatsoever men do unto you,*" that might be sinful; but *whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you.* Would you have them false, dishonest, unkind, tyrannic, towards you? *Whatsoever ye would that they should be to you, be so to them.* Can anything be more just?

II. THE INTUITIONS OF HIS MORAL CREATURES ATTEST THE TRUTH OF THIS TESTIMONY. In all moral intelligences there is—

First: *An intuitive sense of the right.* All have an inbred sentiment of right and wrong. This sentiment implies a moral standard; and what is that standard but God?

Secondly: *There is an intuitive love of the right.* All moral souls love the right in the abstract; they are bound to do it. "I delight in the law of God after the inner man." All consciences go with God.

Thirdly: *There is an intuitive remorse.* Misery springs up in the soul from a conscious departure from the right. Cain, David, Belshazzar, Judas, are examples.

Fourthly: *There is an intuitive appeal to God under the wrong as the Friend of the right.* Oppressed humanity involuntarily looks to God as Judge of all the earth. Deep in the soul of the moral creation is the feeling that God's ways



are just and right. No argument can destroy this consciousness.

III. THE MEDIATION OF HIS SON ATTESTS THE TRUTH OF THIS TESTIMONY. Christ came to establish judgment, rectitude, in the earth. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

First: *His life was the development of Divine righteousness.* He was incarnate rectitude. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

Secondly: *His death was the highest homage to Divine rectitude.* He could have escaped death. It was the inner sense of right that urged Him on.

Thirdly: *His system is the promoter of Divine righteousness.* His truth inculcates it; His Spirit promotes it. His Spirit comes to "convince the world of sin, righteousness," &c.

IV. THE RETRIBUTIONS OF HIS GOVERNMENT ATTEST THE TRUTH OF THIS TESTIMONY. Look at the expulsion of Adam, the deluge, the burning of Sodom, the extermination of the Canaanites, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews. Look on to the retribution of the last day, and see what rectitude marks the whole. (Matt. xxv.)

God is righteous. Some may doubt it, and others may declare that His "ways are not equal;" but those who know Him best, the holy and sanctified intelligences of heaven, chant it evermore in the ear of the universe, as a verity at once the most obvious and delightful.

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SUBJECT :—*History of a Property.*

"And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took council, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."—Matt. xxvii. 6—10.

## Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-fifth.

**F**EW subjects are more worthy of an historic treatment than that of human property. To take the secular property which any man holds, and expound the way in which it has been acquired, how it is employed, the influence it exerts upon its possessor, its general bearings, would be to reveal many principles, both in human nature and in the Divine government, of great interest and importance.

The histories of wars, philosophies, scientific discoveries, and religions, which abound, do not and cannot exactly present those phases of truth which are developed in the history of a man's worldly fortune. The passage before us presents, as the prominent subject, the property of Judas; and its history may be fairly taken as the history of the property of thousands in every age and land.

I. WE SEE IT HERE DESCENDING AS THE LEGACY OF CRIME. "*And the chief priests took the silver pieces.*" (1) The silver pieces were once the property of Judas. They were in his hands; and at first, no doubt, he rejoiced in them as his own. (2) He acquired this property by wickedness. It was his reward for betraying the Son of God. "*What will ye give me?*" This was his avaricious question. He sacrificed principle for property, his Lord for lucre. (3) The wickedness with which he acquired this property threw him into an intolerable remorse. Under the accusations of his conscience, his

existence became unbearable, and he destroyed himself. (4) This property falls into the hands of the very men from whom he had obtained it ; it ruined him, he dies, and he leaves it behind him as the legacy of a tremendous crime. How many fortunes held by the men of this age are the legacies of crime!

II. WE SEE IT HERE INHERITED AS A SOURCE OF ANXIETY. These silver pieces coming into the hands of the chief priests filled them with strange solicitude ; they knew not what to do with them. (1) Their consciences would not allow them to retain them for their own personal use. They felt that they had used this money as a bribe to tempt Judas to a tremendous crime, and that it had come back to them red-hot with avenging justice. Bad as they were, their consciences were not utterly steeled. (2) Their religion would not allow them to devote it to the temple. "It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, for it is the price of blood." The treasury was the chest in the court of the women, for receiving the offerings of worshippers. These technical and hypocritical religionists found the law against putting such money into the treasury of the temple in Deut. xxiii. 18. Thus this money gave them great anxiety ; something, they felt, must be done with it, but what? that was the question ; they could not keep it. Money is often a troublesome possession.

III. WE SEE IT HERE EMPLOYED AS AN EXPIATORY GIFT. "And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in." This field was near Jerusalem, and had been used for making earthenware. We are not told the size. The probability is, that it was of but little value. They bought it as a cemetery for such persons as died at Jerusalem, and did not belong to it. Perhaps the *Zévoi*, for whom the field was purchased, were foreign Jews who attended the festivals. "In the time of Jerome, the poorest outcasts were buried there" (Webster and Wilkinson). That there was no real charity in this act is clear from the fact that Providence brands the field with a name that stand for ages.

as a memorial of their crime. "Wherefore that field was called the field of blood, unto this day." No ; they bought this "old exhausted clay-pit," not from any humane sentiment, or generous impulse, but to atone, if possible, their consciences. How much money, in all ages, has been contributed to the cause of religion and philanthropy with the sole view of expiation.

IV. WE SEE IT HERE OVERRULED AS THE INSTRUMENT OF PROVIDENCE. There is a Providence over all ; originating the good and subordinating the evil. Hence the act of these wicked men in purchasing the field, fulfilled an old prophecy. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value ; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." This is a quotation, not from Jeremiah, but from Zech. xi. 12, 13. The exact language is not given, but the application of the idea is made. The reason why Jeremiah is given instead of Zechariah, is a question which has received different explanations. The most satisfactory seems to be this, that Jeremiah standing first in the Rabbinical order of prophets, gave a title to the whole series.

Wicked men, however uncontrolled in their wickedness, are always made the instruments in working out the Divine arrangements.



SUBJECT :—*The Communion of Saints.*—No. II.

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood."—1 Peter ii. 17.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-sixth.*

**I**N my last homily, I tried to point out what might be looked upon as some of the parts of that communion of saints ; in which—in the Apostles' Creed or elsewhere—we profess our belief. Looking about us for the outward emblems of that communion, I reminded you how, through all the

ages of the Christian era, king and priest, noble and peasant, sage and hermit, martyr and bishop, had all passed through the mystic waters of baptism ; that thus all Christians had been bound into one communion and fellowship in Him, who is Head over all for the sake of His body, that is, the Church.

Passing on, then, to higher ground, I suggested that the communion thus begun in baptism, was carried on and wrought closer in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the emblem of entrance and admission ; the Lord's Supper, of continuance and renewal. Turning your thoughts to the days that are gone, I bade you remember the long line of spiritual ancestors who, with us, had partaken of the sacred feast ever and again prepared for us in Christ's Church. They, from that holy table, went to all the noblest deeds and holiest lives in the world's history. So, too, ye should gladly come, and get the strength they got, the fire that burned in them ; and emulous of like noble names, go forth to do *your* duty as Christians.

But, as I then said, our communion, to be true, must be not outward only, but spiritual too. It must be a communion of, and in that Spirit, who from Adam until now, has wrought in human hearts, and been the living breath of all true life. We are members of a royal knighthood. What, then, are our duties ? One for daily life is—"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood."

I. "HONOUR ALL MEN." These words, addressed as they are to Christians, plainly teach that any distinction or separation, which may be connected with the Christian communion, does not divide us from truest interest in, from real regard to, our fellow-men, even when they do not, like us, partake in Christian communion. While it is ours to say, "I am a Christian, and esteem that above all earthly gain," this does not annul that other sentiment of the Roman poet—

"I am a man, and think nought human without interest for me."

And why is this ? The answer is one on the surface. It meets us in the first sentence of the Lord's Prayer—"Our Father."

Though God is, in a special and fullest sense, the Father of Christians, yet He is, too, the Father of all men, as also one of the heathen poets sang—

“For we even are His offspring.”

And it is here we find the points of contact with the good of heathendom: they groped after, and felt there was, a universal Father—one God. As thus human, then—fellow-children with them of one Creature-Father—we are by St. Peter urged to honor *all* men. Our separation as Christians is from the *evil* in them, in the world, in themselves. Our communion with them is as *men*, as children, of one Father. They were and are, so to say, pictures by the same Great Master; the picture may not have been brought under the renovating power of the Divine Spirit; but the work of the Master is there—blurred it may be and soiled, but still, like ourselves, His work.

But how does this bear upon daily life? In this way. Are we not all too liable, nay often ready, to ridicule or make light of, or esteem meanly, those in whom we see some points of inferiority to ourselves—weaknesses of body or mind, peculiarities, &c., &c. Now I hold that St. Peter teaches us, on the ground of our Christian communion, as *Christians*, to avoid all this. Whoever they are, whatever their defects, their creed, their color, their social position, their dress—in short, in whatever point they are deficient, we are to honor them. “*Honour all men.*” And to take the weakest or the worst of them, is there *not* something to honor? What of their body? At the worst, what a marvellous frame! What of the mind? A wondrous tenant of a wondrous home.

Every man, at his worst, is an object of honor. He is the workmanship of our Father; the redeemed of our Head; he may be the sanctified of the Sanctifier. Let us beware, how, in estimating our fellows, we forget this; at all events, St. Peter's rule must have as much weight with us, as prejudices of class, of creed, of race, of training and education. In all men there is something to honor; take this something and put it in one of the scales of your judgment, in passing

sentence on any man. Further, we Christians are bound not only to honor men, as men—that is, as God's creation—but also to pay to them all the honor they may claim from social position, for Christianity no more separates between its professors and men, *as citizens*, than it does between its professors and men, *as men*. Nothing, to my mind, is plainer than this; a verse from the chapter of my text will illustrate this: "Submit yourselves (says St. Peter) to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Hence it is that Christianity tends to the maintenance of civil order and due social subordination. For such commands, as these of St. Peter, plainly teach this; those who think they see an opposition between positive commands and their *notions*, are bound, in Christian obedience to such commands, to examine very carefully their notions in any particular case, and make sure that these notions—that is, their own interpretations of right—are no less plainly a Divine command than the downright positive law or laws they are going to transgress. As Christians, they are bound to ask themselves, "Is my interpretation of my duty in this case as certainly true, *as it is certainly true* that I am commanded to obey every institution of man? Is it as certainly and undeniably right, as it is undeniably my duty to obey, to honor, to reverence?" If the supposed duty is not thus clearly and *indisputably* the direction of God, then how can we, as Christians, go against teaching so plain, so unmistakeable? "*Honour all men!*" How can we, how do we honor them, if we disobey them, refuse them their due, or think lightly of their wishes? But I must come to the second part of my text—

II. "LOVE THE BRETHREN." For us, the circumference of this command is infinitely wider than in St. Peter's time. Then it was like the first ripple-ring made by a stone thrown into the water. Comparatively few and unknown, the brethren had much need of mutual love and help. But the number grew; and now we call England Christian. Who, then, are our brethren, in St. Peter's sense? Here, it may be,

our notions will differ. My opinion is, that all who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth would have been brethren with St. Peter. So far, then, as those with whom we come in contact are brethren—that is, Christians; believers in and baptized into Christ—it is our duty to love them *as such*. In whatever other relation, or position, they stand to us, this duty must enter into and modify our feelings toward them. And does not this, *for us*, add strength, increased strength, to the first part of the text. We are to honor all men, as men, as citizens, as members of society: and at the same time we are to love all brethren—as Christians. To St. Peter, these classes—citizens, Christians,—would present themselves, not only as distinct objects of thought, but also to a great extent distinct *in fact*. But to us here in England this is not so much so. The citizens and Christians are united. We then are bound to unite the love and honor. And so far as we believe any of our friends, parents, rulers, monarchs, to be Christians indeed—judged charitably, after the Bible fashion—then we are bound not only to honor them in their several stations, but to add to that honor *love*; both to honor and love, to obey and love. I cannot go into particulars as to the way in which we are to show our love to particular classes of our particular brethren. This is, to a great extent, a question for each man's own judgment; yet I may throw out a hint or two of a negative rather than a positive kind—hints against two extremes. As Christians, we ought to be on our guard against leaving out of the range of our Christian love those near to us. Christian love is for husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, master and servant. It should be like a current of air to fan the warmth of the affection, already lighted by birth, association, or gratitude. Christian love does not ignore human ties; it purifies, exalts, and gives them new strength—a strength of patience, sweetness, endurance, because it is strength from above.

But your Christian love must not end in the circle immediately about you. Charity *does* begin at home; but it does



not end there. You must look on yourselves each as centres of many circles, with the same centre, but different radii—as centres of many concentric circles. And there is plenty of need of more Christian love of this sort, as there is of the home Christian love ; and we may all, without wasting our energies by diffusiveness, think of those outside the inmost circle, and sometimes let our Christian love *work* as well as think. Avoid both extremes. Never forget to cultivate Christian love for those immediately tied to you ; at the same time do all you can, whenever you can, in whatever way you can, for all Christians who are oppressed by any weight, be it of sin, or poverty, or want, or sickness. Remember, there are such things about us ; and then—called as you are by the name of Him who made us render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's ; of Him who healed all manner of infirmity, and pitied all sorrow ; who Himself obeyed every ordinance of man, submitting Himself even to death ; called by His name—"Honour all men, love the brotherhood," even as He loved and honored them in earnest, thoughtful, patient, self-denying action and life. Amen. F. HEPPENSTALL, B.A.



SUBJECT:—*The Still Small Voice : or, the Power of Silent Influence.*

"And after the fire a still small voice."—1 Kings xix. 12.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-seventh.

**H**OLY men have their moments of distressing sadness. This is touchingly illustrated in the history of the prophet Elijah. Though eminently a "man of God," he was occasionally greatly influenced by external circumstances. He who single-handed and alone, could boldly face his bitterest enemies—Ahab and the high priests of Baal—was seen fleeing from the presence of a woman, and concealing himself in a distant cave. These words refer to an incident of great importance. While the prophet, in this solitary retreat, was indulging in a train of gloomy and despairing

thoughts, an old familiar voice fell on his ears. "The word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, what doest thou here, Elijah?" This pointed question startled him, changed the current of his thoughts, and he attempted to defend himself; but he was ordered to "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord." He instantly obeyed; and scenes the most sublime successively presented themselves to his view. "And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." These were pure physical appearances. The wind, earthquake, and fire were illustrative of the *power* of God; and the "still small voice" was indicative of His gracious *presence*. When it fell on the prophet's ears, "he wrapped his face in his mantle," as expressive of deep and profound reverence.

The subject which this portion of Scripture appears to present to our view is, *the power of silent influence*. We shall make three remarks relative to this power.

I. IT IS A POWER WHICH GOD USUALLY EMPLOYS TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WORK. Though God sometimes employs "the wind, the earthquake, the fire," to accomplish His designs, these are not His most powerful agents. They are used only to prepare the way for the "still small voice," that potent, silent influence which pervades all His works. This power of silent influence, God employs in a variety of operations.

First: *In the government of the material world*. How noiselessly does He work the great machinery of Nature! There is not a sound to be heard. Poets talk of the "*music of the spheres*;" but it is a music that has never fallen on their ears. The stupendous worlds which appear to us like lamps in the firmament, move silently in their orbits without noise or confusion. The whole physical universe is held together by an invisible silent force—a force infinitely more powerful

than that of the stormy wind, the terrible earthquake, or the devouring flames—the force of *gravity*. This mighty power pervades all nature, guides the stars in their courses, weighs the mountains in balances, and gently rocks the cradle of the ocean. Yet how silently it does its work !

Secondly : *In the dispensation of Providence.* We sometimes imagine we hear nothing but the stormy wind, or the terrible earthquake, levelling to the ground all our hopes. The fire of Divine disapprobation seems to rage most fiercely, and we feel ready to perish. But these are not the chief agents employed by our Father in the dispensation of His Providence. “After the fire a still small voice.” Pious Eli for a time could see nothing but the fierce tempest. His very thoughts were tossed, as it were, on the wings of the whirlwind. The bloody conflict, the death of his sons, the rejection of his family, were the voices that loudly rung in his ears, filling his heart with sadness and sorrow. But at last another voice fell on his ears ; he recognized the sound, and he calmly exclaimed, “It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.” “After the fire a still small voice.” Sometimes the means of punishment are very visible ; their language is stern and threatening. But blessings come to us as noiseless as the light, as silent as the morning dew. “After the fire a still small voice.”

Thirdly : *In the renovation of the soul.* “The wind, the earthquake, and the fire,” may be used as preparatory means to the great work of conversion. The thunder of a broken law may send terror to the heart, the lightning flash of justice may scathe the trembling spirit, the fire of Sinai may reveal to the sinner his guilt and peril ; but it requires something more to cause Elijah to wrap his face in his mantle, to produce faith, obedience, and holy love—“After the fire a still small voice.” The influence of the Spirit on the heart is secret, silent, and effective. The singing, the earthquake, the rattling of the prisoners’ chains, filled the Philippian jailor with intense alarm ; his whole being was awfully excited. With the impulse of a maniac he grasped the sword, intending to commit self-destruction ; but the words of Paul,

uttered with Christian kindness, fell like oil on the troubled thoughts of his heart, a new light broke upon his mind, and he cried, "Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?" Then, "after the fire came a still small voice:" "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Here was a voice more powerful than the sound of the earthquake—the voice of the Spirit in the soul. We observe again, respecting the power of *silent influence*—

II. IT IS A POWER THAT IS PRODUCTIVE OF THE GREATEST GOOD. It is folly to think that because an influence is silent it cannot be effective. We have already showed that silent forces are the most powerful; and here we shall offer two or three remarks showing that they are also productive of the greatest good. The power of silent influence produces a variety of beneficial effects.

First: *It awakens thought.* The wind, the earthquake, the fire, sometimes disturb the slumbers of a soul in sin. They produce dread, anxiety, and slavish fear; but it is the silent influence that awakens calm and reflective thought. Though the wind broke to pieces the rocks, the earthquake rent the very mountains, and the fire enveloped Sinai in a blaze, the prophet stood on the mount with his face uncovered; but the moment he heard the "still small voice," he fell down and worshipped. Where can we find that influence that touches the heart and makes man think? Not amidst noise and tumult; the scene of disorder and confusion is not favorable to reflection. In order to awake right Christian thoughts, you must retire to your closet, visit the garden, and accompany your Saviour to the lonely hill. While you calmly read your Bible, or devoutly listen to the word of truth, the "still small voice" of the Holy Spirit falls on the ear, and awakens in the mind a train of thought which will end in the salvation of the soul.

Secondly: *It operates on the heart.* The noisy tempest may affect the passions, stir up the animal feelings; but it cannot reach the sinner's heart. There are two inlets by which you

can reach a man's heart—the intellect, and the affections. The former deals chiefly with our words; the latter are affected principally by that silent influence which streams out of our whole life and character. When the eye of Peter in the court met the glance of Jesus, his very soul was stirred up. That mild, reproving glance, conveyed a stream of silent influence that at once reached his heart. “He went out and wept bitterly.” When a sinner's heart is brought under the direct, invisible, silent influence of the Holy Spirit, it will soon be impressed, melted, changed.

Thirdly : *It regulates the actions.* The very power that impresses the heart, will also mould and shape the actions of life. It is often remarked that “example is more powerful than precept.” The reason of this is evident. While the sound of your words falls only upon the ear, the language of the example speaks to the whole man. A stream of silent influence flows out of your example unknown to yourself, impressing the heart, moulding the sentiments, and regulating the actions of your friend. Then the “still small voice” of God in Providence, of Christ in the Gospel, and of the Spirit in the soul, produces the same effects. We notice again, relative to the power of *silent influence*—

III. IT IS A POWER THAT IS LASTING IN ITS EFFECTS. Why is the power of silent influence so durable?

First : *It is emblematic of the Divine presence.* God was not in the awful tempest which preceded the “still small voice.” Some people imagine that where there is a strong expression of natural feeling, there is an indication of the Divine presence; but generally there is more of the human there than the Divine. The Divine presence in the temple was never displayed amidst noise and tumult. It sat in majestic silence on the mercy-seat, behind the veil.

Secondly : *It becomes a living element in the new character.* The believer in Christ is a new creature; the change he has undergone is not a superficial one, the influence that operated upon his soul has become a vital element of his new spiritual

nature. Do you wonder, that some who once made a noisy profession of Christ have returned like the "washed sow," to sin's filthy mire? It was all "wind;" and "God was not in the wind." He who was influenced by the "still small voice," the silent influence of God's word and Spirit, is still travelling heavenward. This subject shows us the evil of the spirit of self-reliance. It brought Elijah to trouble, and deprived him of some of heaven's best comforts. It also teaches us not to trust too much to external appearances. These may be very sublime and yet destitute of that pure living influence which humbles, awakens, and saves the soul. Have you heard the "still small voice?" Has its silent influence drawn you to the Cross? J. H. HUGHES.

## Biblical Criticism.

THE CODEX SINAITICUS:—*Various Readings.*

WE proceed with the Gospel according to St. Mark:—

### ADDITIONS.

Mark x. 28.—At the end, *τί ἅρα ἔσται ἡμῖν;*

Mark x. 40.—At the end, *ὑπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς μου.*

### OMISSIONS.

Mark ix. 23.—*πιστεῦσαι*. This omission brings out more clearly the formal reference of our Lord's words to those which He was answering. The man had said *εἰ τι δύνη*, "if thou *canst* at all, help us, for pity's sake." To this Jesus answers, *τό, εἰ δύνη*, "That can I, if thou *canst*—all things are possible (*πάντα δυνατὰ*) to him that believeth." As if He had said:—It is indeed a question of *power*; but if thou hast *power* to believe, I have *power* to help. All things are in the *power* of him that believeth.

Mark ix. 44.—This verse is wholly wanting.

Mark ix. 45, 46.—From *εἰς τὸ πῦρ*, to the end of verse 46, is wholly wanting.

Mark ix. 48.—*τοῦ πυρός* after *γένναν*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark ix. 49.—*καὶ πᾶσα θυσία ἀλλ' ἁλισθήσεται*. But this omission *may* be a mistake, caused by the repetition of the word *ἁλισθήσεται*.

Mark x. 24.—*τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐπὶ τοῖς χρήμασιν*.

Mark x. 30.—*οἰκίας καὶ ἀδελφούς καὶ ἀδελφὰς καὶ μητέρας καὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀγροὺς μετὰ διωγμῶν*. The text is, however, brought by various revisers into nearer correspondence with the received text.

Mark xi. 26.—This verse is wholly wanting.

#### SUBSTITUTIONS.

Mark ix. 41.—*ἐμὸν ἔσται*, that is, *ἔστε*; instead of *Χριστοῦ ἔσται*.

Mark ix. 42.—*μυλὸς ὄνικος* instead of *λίθος μυλῶδης*.

Mark x. 42.—*βασιλεῖς* instead of *μεγάλοι αὐτῶν*.

Mark x. 50.—*ἀναπηδήσας*, instead of *ἀναστὰς*. This is a much more graphic reading than that in the received text, and is adopted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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DR. MORELL, in his "History of Modern Philosophy," (vol. I, p. 419) says:—"Many of the Fathers built their theological notions, even too much, upon philosophical dogmas; and the great mass of theological authority, both in ancient and modern times, teaches us to base revealed religion upon the broader principles of natural religion. All the great systems of theology that the Church has produced, all at least which have any pretensions to merit, proceed distinctly upon this

principle, and correctly so. How the existence of God could possibly be revealed to us by inspiration or authority, is a problem which has never yet been solved. All revelation proceeds upon the *fact* of His existence, and we know not where this fact could ever find a valid basis, were it disowned as a primary conclusion of our reason and conscience."

From the strain of these remarks we dissent, and representing as they do what we regard as an error, which also is widely spread, injurious to the student, yet specious, and requiring some degree of perspicacity for escape from it, we shall briefly deal with them in this place under the head of Natural Theology.

The value of the Fathers lies in their character, not as philosophers, but as witnesses and interpreters. Whatever philosophical opinions were held, for instance, by Clement of Alexandria, or by Origen, belonged to them as individuals, not as ecclesiastical teachers. Dr. M. is utterly wrong in supposing that the teaching of the Church is based upon any kind of philosophy. The Church bases her teaching wholly on the notion of revelation, and in doing so, is logically right. What "great systems of theology" Dr. M. has in view, we know not. Were the great documents all written in the spirit of the "*Summa*" of Thomas, and similar scholastic writings, the assertion would be just. But it is manifest that they are not, that the metaphysical method characterizes the middle ages. Justin, Cyprian, Athanasius, Basil, and the Gregories, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Jerome, all wrote either as witnesses or interpreters. Augustin is certainly, to a considerable degree, an exception. But it should be remembered that his zeal against Pelagius urged him beyond the limits of Scripture and the Church, and that he was regarded by the orthodox bishops of his time as an innovator. At the Council of Nice, the question which the assembled bishops asked each other, was not, whether Homoousianism or Homoiousianism, was the most philosophical, but which had been handed down as the standard belief of the Church.

Dr. Morell would probably reckon "Pearson's Exposition



of the Creed " among "the great systems of theology" which have "pretensions to merit." He appears, however, not to have sufficiently considered what the Bishop says (Article I.) respecting the nature of revelation, and God's "patefaction of Himself."—(pp. 7, 21, folio edition.)

God's "patefaction of Himself" is the appropriate basis of Christian theology. Those to whom any person has appeared and spoken, can have no doubt of the existence of that person. And those who believe the testimony of such as have enjoyed this intercourse, will share their assurance.

Bishop Butler occasionally uses expressions, which, at first hearing, sound very like the sentiment of Dr. Morell. For instance, just at the beginning of the Second Part of the "Analogy," he says, "For though natural religion is the foundation and principal part of Christianity, it is not in any sense the whole of it." It is evident, however, on considering the context, and especially the sentence which immediately follows, "Christianity is a re-publication of natural religion," that his meaning is widely different from Dr. Morell's. What Butler holds is evidently this, that the general truths taught by Natural Theology, and re-affirmed by revelation, lie at the basis of those truths which are peculiar to Christianity. This is very far from making Natural Theology, *as actually spelt out from nature*, the basis of the theology of revelation.

Yet although Natural Theology is unnecessary as a basis for Christian Theology, we would not have it discarded; since nature is one and a very glorious instrument of Divine manifestation. And it has this advantage, that it is always at hand. Therefore, the student must include Natural Theology in his plan. And for the reason just mentioned, that its principles, by whatever method ascertained, whether from nature or revelation, logically underlie those which are peculiar to Christianity, it is convenient that the study of it should take the precedence.

The student may begin with Dr. Cudworth's "True Intellectual System of the Universe," a work which is a lasting

monument of the author's profundity as a scholar and a philosopher ; and which is, and is likely to remain, the standard treatise on Theism.

There is a great deal of excellent matter in "Tucker's "Light of Nature Pursued." His style is fresh and lively, and he can hardly be read without considerable mental invigoration. The second volume contains discussions which pass the boundaries of Natural Theology, and what he says of Christian doctrine must often be taken with a grain of salt.

Paley's "Natural Theology" is the book which is usually read on the Argument from Design, and a very similar method is pursued, but more widely and further in Dr. Macculloch's "Proofs and Illustrations of the Attributes of God."

Butler's "Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature," as the title indicates, is not confined to Natural Theology, but leads from that onwards to a philosophic and unanswerable defence of the Christian revelation. To have mastered this work is to have accomplished an intellectual feat, and to have learned the only right method of thinking on the subjects which it deals with. "The Method of the Divine Government, Physical and Moral," by the Rev. James M'Cash, unites soberness with a considerable degree of originality.

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## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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### *The Seventh Sunday after Trinity.*

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—Rom. vi. 22.

IN the former part of the chapter, the apostle compares and contrasts two services ; the one the service of sin, in which his readers formerly lived ; the other the service of righteousness or of God, in which they are living now.

In some respects these services *agree*, in others they *differ*. One most important respect in which they agree is that *each excludes the other*. The apostle takes it for granted that *man must have a master*, he must follow and obey some leading principle. He cannot at one and the same time be the servant of *two* masters, especially of masters so opposite as sin and righteousness, Satan and God. He must be either the servant of sin and free from righteousness, or else, having been made free from sin, become the servant of righteousness. The two services agree in *mutual intolerance*.

They agree also in this, that *each is a voluntary service*. Sin cannot use force to compel us to serve it, nor does God force us to His service. It is our own will and choice, our *yielding*, which renders us servants of either sin or righteousness. No power on earth or in hell can bring us under the bondage of sin without our own consent; and so on the other side, the service of God is *voluntary*, and obedience to Him is *willing*. "Know ye not, that to whom ye *yield yourselves* servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

These services agree, finally, in that *each is followed by recompense*.

Now let us see in what they *differ*.

They differ, first, in *order*. The service of sin is supposed to come *first*, and the service of God *follows*. The apostle speaks, through the chapter, of the state of sin as something *past*, renounced, and to be forgotten. But the state of righteousness is that which exists now. Therefore, in some passages, he calls the sinful nature *the old man*, and the other *the new man*. "Knowing this, that our *old man* is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (verse 6.) Again: "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the *old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the *new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephes. iv. 22—24.) These services differ,

therefore, also in *duration*. The one is *temporary*, the other is *lasting*. When we become servants of God, our former state is terminated ; we have done with *sin* as a master ; but our serving God is to last for ever.

They differ, moreover, in *the mode in which we enter them*. Although the entrance is in each case voluntary, yet the doors are widely apart. We become the servants of sin by yielding to temptation, by giving ourselves up to a low impulse ; "He that committeth sin, the same is the servant of sin." We become the servants of God by yielding ourselves intelligently to a *righteous authority*.

They differ as much in *character*. The service of sin is *hard bondage*. In proportion as we yield to sin, it acquires influence over us and deprives us of power. The force of habit enthrals ever more. We gain a fatal facility in sinning, so as gradually to do it without effort or compunction ; whilst on the other hand the difficulty of obedience is increased, and at last becomes impossibility. The way of death goes downward ; every step we take increases our *momentum*, until the force becomes irresistible by any arrestive power of nature. In spite of the witness and the remonstrances of conscience, we go on sinning. "*That which I do I allow not : for what I would, that do I not ; but what I hate, that do I.*"

On the other hand, the service of Christ is delightful, because, although it involves self-denial, yet it rests on *the new power of the will*, and stands in such action as we approve and love. Conscience now no longer blames but applauds, and we are at peace. *My yoke, saith the Lord, is easy, and my burthen is light*. His law is *the perfect law of liberty*, and *His service is perfect freedom*.

The service of sin is *deceitful*. The vassals are cheated with a fancied freedom, which is really but brutish license. Christ's service is a real, a rational, and noble liberty. He said to the Jews : *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*.

The service of sin is a state of *condemnation*. The sinner is condemned by his own conscience, and by the *One Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy*. The sentence is *past*.

upon him, and though the execution is suspended, it is none the less certain—there is no natural means of escape. But the service of Christ is a state of *favor*. The hope of acceptance with God cheers the heart, and His smile sheds sunshine about our path.

These services differ in their *course*. The one course is *monotonous*, the other is *progressive from one excellence to another*. Lawlessness leads on to lawlessness—nothing better, nothing different; but righteousness, which is obedience to the authority of God, leads on to *holiness*, which is complete consecration to the Divine service. “As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to *iniquity unto iniquity* (τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν), even so now yield your members servants to *righteousness unto holiness* (τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν).” (ver. 19.)

Each of these services has a recompense; but their recompenses differ in *nature*. The one recompense comprehends all the evils, known and unknown, which are involved in that most fearful and woeful of words—*death*, destruction of the man, the laying waste of all his hopes, the withdrawal of all enjoyment, the withering of the spirit. The other recompense consists of all that richness and vastness of good denoted by the glorious word—whose meaning is to us, for the most part, a mystery as yet—*eternal life*, the perfection of all the faculties, and *fulness of joy*.

As these recompenses differ in nature, so also in respect of *desert*. Though equally certain, the one has been *merited*, the other *not*. The sinner has well deserved his doom, and this knowledge itself will be the worst part of his punishment. But no *creature*, not even the holiest, could be rightly said to *deserve* blessing from God. How much less can the sinner! If he receives forgiveness, it is a *gift*; if eternal life crowns his labors, it is a *gift*. As we have seen that the sinner's punishment is enhanced by the knowledge that it is *deserved*, so the blessedness of the righteous is enhanced by the knowledge that it is *undeserved*, by the sweetness of *gratitude* to Him to whose favor it is due. *When ye have done all, said the Lord to the disciples, say, we are unprofitable servants; we*

*have done that which it was our duty to do.* Hence the apostle here calls the one kind of recompense *wages*, the other *gift*. “The *wages* of sin is death; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The text shows us the *commencement*, the *progress*, and the *end* of the Christian state.

The Christian state commences in a change, a deliverance from fancied freedom but real bondage; an introduction to what is called *service*, but is really freedom. The freedom of the ungodly is like that of the ox which wanders at will through pastures where he is fattening for slaughter. The infidel calls himself a *free* thinker, but in reality he is afraid of contact with God, he fears candid reflection, he is shy of his own conscience; and these fears debar him from soaring into that wide and delightful region of truth to which we are introduced by God's Word. So the sleeper dreams that he is flying, and, half-awaking, is unwilling to find himself in a confined space and an ignoble position. The service of the Christian is that of one who knows that he is the subject of a beneficent Fatherly government, which seeks only his true interest; with whose objects he sympathizes and co-operates so far as he understands, and where understanding and knowledge fail, faith takes their place; so that when he can trace no longer, he trusts the methods of Divine love and wisdom.

The deliverance from his old bondage he owes to the favor and power of God. He has burst his fetters, but by a strength not his own—the power of God Almighty. He is free from condemnation; but it is because God, in infinite mercy, has granted forgiveness.

The Christian's *progress* is shown in his *bearing fruit*. “Ye have your *fruit* unto holiness.” We are here to do good works; we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. When these good works are done, and our graces appear, there is something to show as a result, after all that God has done on our behalf. Happy, if after the gifts of Providence and grace, the Saviour's blood, the privilege of Holy Baptism, the

Gift of the Spirit, and all the means of grace, there is found in us something acceptable to God through Christ !

The man who makes no return but sin may well be confounded. The apostle here contrasts the fruit of holiness with the *disgraceful* results of the service of sin : "What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed ?" ashamed of their folly, deformity, and defilement. Sad for a man to suffer hard bondage and condemnation, the remonstrances of conscience and the degradation of his nature, and after all, to have nothing to show for his toil and sacrifice, nothing valuable or beautiful, naught but what he is ashamed of, which he would not rather hide ! Yet this is the only result of sin.

We see here *the end* of Christian service : *the end everlasting life*. The end accords well with the beginning and the progress. It is consistent that what began with deliverance, and proceeded with bringing forth fruits of holiness, should end with eternal life. The Beginner of the work, and He who carries it on, is also the Finisher. It is God who sets us free, it is God who ordains the fruits of holiness, and eternal life is the gift of God.

The apostle sets the privileges of the Roman Christians before them, not only to fill them with gladness and urge them to thanksgiving, but to call forth effort for purity and consecration according to their calling. We also have been called to God's service. We have professed faith in the Gospel, have renounced evil, and promised to keep God's commandments. Let our calling be obeyed, our profession verified and justified. If by God's grace we have broken the bonds of sin, let us beware lest the fetters be again assumed and rivetted faster than before. Let us *yield our members servants to righteousness unto holiness*. While we *offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving*, let us pray for daily renewal, that our fruits may be acceptable, our works good and fair. "Every good giving (*δōσεις*) and every perfect gift (*δῶρημα*) is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." If He into whose name we were baptized has commenced the work of our deliverance, we have the best encouragement for further

effort, as He never deserts the soul that strives in earnest for progress in righteousness and holiness. Let that effort be made—the vows of God are upon us. Then if by God's blessing we bear the fruits of holiness, the tree of hope shall blossom evermore, a fair foretelling of God's crowning gift of eternal life, *the end* of His grace and of our service.

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### TEMPTERS.

"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."—2 Peter ii. 19.

IN all ages there have abounded, in every part of the world and grade of society, those who are pre-eminently the Tempters of their fellow-men. They are the emissaries of the great Tempter Satan; they are inspired with his spirit, and they are diligent in his work. The subjection of souls to their own errors and lusts, is their grand work. They are the devourers of virtue. The text reveals such to our attention—it points us to the instrumentality they employ, the character they sustain, and the conquest they achieve.

I. THE INSTRUMENTALITY THEY EMPLOY. What is the instrumentality the Tempter

employs in order to rifle of their virtue those whom he attacks? First: *It is a promise.* "They promise." Promises are cheap things: hence they abound, they stream in a constant flow from the lips of the false. They cost nothing; the poorest can make them, yet they are mighty enchantments. The devil came to man first in a promise. "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." And to the Son of God in the wilderness, the arch-seducer promises "the kingdoms of the earth." Promise is Satan's golden hook that he lets down into the river of human life, which souls catch at, and become his. The ungodly world is led by fair promises. Long life, pleasure, wealth, fame, are held out to the eye of hope to attract the soul from the orbit of innocence and truth. Secondly: It is a promise of "*liberty.*" They promise them liberty.



Liberty is a word that charms the heart; it has something in it that vibrates in all the chords of the soul—something towards which all the tides of our nature heave and struggle. The Tempter promises liberty—liberty to act, without the shackles of responsibility; to live as you list; to riot uncontrolled in worldly pleasures.

II. THE CHARACTERS THEY SUSTAIN. "They themselves are the servants of corruption." They are the miserable vassals of lust and depravity. The devil is a great slave. He is in chains of darkness; he is a wretched victim of his own ambitious impulses, and self-confounding efforts. So are all Tempters "servants of corruption." First: *Their character is the most degraded.* They are *servants*—servants of what? Servants of the basest, the most contemptible thing in the universe; the abhorrence of angels and of God—*corruption*. Convicts, doomed to the most degrading work that the avenging justice of men can invent, are respectable in their calling, compared with the debased service of a deathless soul engaged in fulfilling the dictates of corruption. An immortal intelligence, employing all its wonderful

powers in serving avarice, lusts, appetites, and all the foul demons of depravity, is a sight at which angels may well stand aghast with mingled horror and contempt. Secondly: *Their promise is most preposterous.* The idea of the slaves of corruption promising *liberty*! Promises, perhaps, as a rule, amongst men, abound most, where there is the least ability to fulfil. Strong words are employed to hide weakness, and rich overtures of good to others to conceal the wretched indigence of him who speaks. Well does Peter speak in the preceding verse of those Tempters as speaking "great swelling words of vanity." The devil is all promise. Beware of Tempters; they are bland in word and fair in aspect; but trust them not. They hold out liberty to you, but they themselves are the servants of corruption. Sooner trust the poorest pauper to give you a kingdom, than trust your tempter to give you liberty.

III. THE CONQUEST THEY ACHIEVE. "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." "Of whom," that is, that by which anyone is overcome—gets the mastery of him. If he is overcome by avarice, avarice is his tyrant; if by

sensuality, sensuality is his tyrant. First: *This conquest shows the falsehood of the tempter in his promise.* They promise liberty, and here is the result—*bondage* of the most painful and ignominious kind. The liberty that sin promises is slavery. Freedom from the obligations of duty, the restraints of conscience, and the rule of religion, is the spirit of a slavery that is Satanic in its character. The greater the sinner the greater the slave. Secondly: *This conquest shows the ultimate wretchedness of the victim.* He is brought in “bondage.” What is the bondage? (1) *Their slavery is the most real.* Chains and prison walls can only enslave the body. No granite can imprison, no chains can manacle the soul. But he who is the slave of corruption, is bound in spirit. He is held in captivity. (2) *Their slavery is the most criminal.* Corporal slavery is generally a misfortune; the sufferer is not responsible for his position. Not so with those who are servants of corruption. They have made their own tyrants, they have forged their own fetters, they are self-bound. (3) *Their slavery is the most lasting.* Death destroys corporal slavery. In the grave the serf is free from his tyrant. Not so with this bondage.

#### THE REDEPTIVE FORCE AND THE REDEPTIVE WORK.

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”—Rom. viii. 2.

MAN'S great need is moral redemption; redemption of his intellect from error, his affections from impurity, his heart from selfishness, his conscience from guilt, his whole spirit from the slavery of sin. This redemption is the subject of the text. It leads us to consider—

#### I. THE REDEPTIVE FORCE.

What is the power to effect the moral redemption of man? It is here represented as a *law*—a law of the *Spirit*—a law of the spirit of *life*. First: It is a “*law*.” The Gospel is called a law. Isaiah represents the isles as waiting for this *law*. James speaks of it as the *perfect law of liberty*. A law is always associated with *authority*, *publicity*, and *sanction*. The Gospel issues from the highest authority, is revealed to humanity, and is enforced by sanction of life and death. Secondly: It is a law of the “*Spirit*.” The Spirit of God is its author, revealer, and applier. Thirdly: It is the law of the spirit of *life*. The Gospel gives *life*—judicial, mental, and spiritual life. Fourthly: It is the law of

the spirit of life "*in Christ Jesus.*" The Spirit comes through Christ and is dispensed by Christ. The whole redemptive power is by Christ Jesus.

The text leads us to consider—

## II. THE REDEPTIVE WORK.

In what does it consist? The soul is made free from the law of sin and death. First: *The spirit is freed from the condemnation of that moral law which discovers sin and dooms to death.* By the moral law is the knowledge of sin, and that law dooms every sinner to death. "Cursed is every one," &c. The moral law can do nothing for the sinner. Secondly: *The soul is made free from that evil principle within which acts as the law of sin and death.* Sin has become the law of our nature. It is an all-controlling force, subordinating everything to itself. Now the redemptive work involves the freeing of the soul from the condemnation of the moral law of God, and the domination of the depraved law of humanity. This is the work, and concerning it we may make three remarks. First: *This work is essential to the well-being of every soul.* God's law dooms the sinner to death, and the principle of

depravity within works death. "The wages of sin is death." Secondly: *This work is a matter of consciousness when it is effected.* The apostle speaks of it as a matter of conscious certainty. "*Hath made me free.*" He who has been delivered must know it. Thirdly: *This work has to do with man in his individual character.* "Hath delivered me." The Gospel is not like some political measure which may free a nation in the aggregate. It frees the race by freeing the individual; it works from the centre to the circumference. The Gospel has to do with the individual man.

## THE GLORY OF THE GOOD.

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."—Rom. viii. 17.

WHATEVER may be the estimate which worldly men entertain concerning the disciples of Christ, and whatever humble view these may entertain of themselves, one thing is clear—that the Bible represents them as sustaining a position of pre-eminent dignity and privilege. From the text we learn—

I. That they are in a distinguishing sense the "CHILDREN OF GOD." "If children," &c. There is a

sense in which all men are the children of God. "He is the Father of all spirits." (1) They are His *offspring*. They are begotten by His almighty energy. (2) They *resemble* Him in their spiritual constitution;—they have reason, conscience, spontaneity, immortality. But genuine Christians are His children in a higher sense. First: They have a *special resemblance to Him*. They are "partakers" of His *moral* nature. Love, which rules Him, is their inspiration and life. They wear His moral image. Secondly: They have a *special affection for Him*. The true *filial* spirit which mankind lost through sin, fills and fires their nature. They have "the spirit of adoption." Thirdly: They have a *special attention from Him*. His heart is on them. He educates them as a Father, and provides for them as a Father. To be His children in this sense, what an inestimable privilege! what a glory and distinction! From the text we learn that—

II. They are in a *distinguishing* sense the INHERITORS OF ALL GOOD. "If children, then heirs," &c. First: They are *heirs of God*. Civil society and natural instincts authorize children to expect the property of their parents. Children step into

the inheritance of their parents. Christians are heirs of God. What an inheritance is theirs!—all things are theirs—"Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death." Their inheritance is sometimes called "an inheritance amongst them which are sanctified;" sometimes "the inheritance of the saints in light;" sometimes "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Their inheritance, in truth, is nothing less than God Himself, all that He is, and all that He has. "The Lord is their portion." Secondly: They are "*joint-heirs with Christ*." Heirs to the same honors and blessings as Christ. "The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them." They shall "enter into the joy of their Lord." "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne."

Such are the intimations which the text furnishes concerning the glory of the good. The grand question is—Are we His children in the apostolic sense?—"If children, then heirs," &c. If heirs, let our spirit and deportment be in keeping with our *grand position and lofty prospects*.

A GREAT GAIN, A GREAT LOSS,  
AND A GREAT CURSE.

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."—2 Peter ii. 20.

THE text leads us to consider—

I. A GREAT GAIN. What is the gain? An escape from "the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." First: *The world is a scene of moral corruption.* By *the world*, is meant—not of course the physical creation—but human society. It requires no Bible to assure us that mankind is depraved. Let the worldling and the sceptic who believe in Shakespeare as the prince of teachers, mark well the language of the great dramatist on the question of the world's depravity:—

"All is oblique—  
There's nothing level in our cursed  
natures  
But direct villainy."

The moral spirit that animates and rules the world, is hostile to truth, justice, purity, God. Secondly: *To escape these corruptions is of the greatest importance to man.* If he live and die in them, he is ruined for ever. The

world is the Sodom from which he must escape, otherwise he will be consumed by the gathering storm of fire. Thirdly: *This escape is effected through "the knowledge of Christ."* Other sciences have failed, signally and miserably failed, to purify the world. But the knowledge of Christ is designed for this very purpose, is admirably fitted to accomplish it, and never fails when tried. The most glorious sight in the world is the sight of a man escaping from its pollutions by this knowledge of Christ. The text leads us to consider—

II. A GREAT LOSS. Peter supposes the position of escapement after being gained, *lost*. They are "entangled and overcome." First: *Good men, being moral agents, can fall.* An impossibility of falling is incompatible with the constitution of a free and responsible agent. Secondly: *Good men, in this world, are surrounded by influences tempting them to apostasy.* There is so much to entangle, so much to overcome on all hands. Thirdly: *Good men in this world have fallen from the positions they have occupied.* David, Peter, &c., are examples. Fourthly: *Good men are warned in the Bible against the danger of falling.* "Let

him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," &c. The text leads us to consider—

III. A GREAT CURSE. "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning." On the assumption that he continues entangled and overcome, better had he never escaped, better had he continued down in the world's pollutions. "His latter end" is worse—First: *Because he is the subject of greater guilt.* He has sinned against higher knowledge and influences than he ever did before. His latter end is worse—Secondly: *Because he has the elements of greater distress.* He has greater sources of regret and greater contrasts in his experience. His latter end is worse—Thirdly: *Because he is in a*

*condition of greater hopelessness.* They are less susceptible to converting influence than they were when the Gospel first influenced them. He who leaves a brilliantly lighted room to go out on a journey in the night, feels the darkness more dense and confounding, than he who has been out from the commencement of night-fall. The patient, too, who meets with a complete relapse after having been raised to convalescence sinks into a state more hopeless far, than he was when the physician was first called to his aid. *The latter end is worse than the beginning.* Heaven knows that the state before the gracious change took place was bad enough, too bad fully to estimate; how bad, then, must the latter end be!

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## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

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### RECORDING POWER OF CONSCIENCE.

Men conceive they can manage their sins with secrecy; but they carry about them a letter, or book rather, written by God's finger, their conscience bearing witness to all their actions. But sinners being often detected and accused, hereby grow wary at last, and to prevent this speaking paper from telling any tales, do smother, stifle, and suppress it when they

go about the committing of any wickedness. Yet conscience, though buried for a time in silence, hath a resurrection and discovers all to their greater shame and heavier punishment.

THOMAS FULLER.

### A WOUNDED CONSCIENCE.

To fear a wounded conscience is in part to feel it antedating one's misery, and tormenting

himself before the time, seeking for that he would loathe to find, like the wicked in the Gospel, of whom it is said, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and looking for those things which are coming."—IBID.

#### CONSCIENCE AND THE BIBLE.

Conscience and the Bible have a common meeting point behind, as it were, or above, in law : and a common meeting-place in front, in virtue. As they point upwards or backwards, their lines meet in Divine law ; as they tend forwards or downwards, their lines meet in human virtue. This thought might be presented in a sort of diagram. Look at an elongated diamond-shaped figure. At the extremities of a line drawn across between the two larger angles, let conscience and the Bible stand inscribed ; conscience on the left, and the Bible on the right. The other two extremities, those of a

line joining the smaller angles, may indicate the relative positions, the one of law, the other of virtue. Beginning at a point marked for law, draw two diverging lines till they reach two other points, opposite to one another, marked for conscience and the Bible respectively ; thereafter let the lines converge till they come together in a fourth point, that may be marked as denoting virtue. Such is a sort of geometrical representation of the positions occupied by law, the Bible, conscience, virtue, relatively to one another. Law is prior to both conscience and the Bible ; it is recognised as prior by both of them ; both of them look up to it and do it homage. Virtue again is under them ; it appeals to them ; they judge it. Conscience and the Bible acknowledge law ; they approve virtue ; and across the line joining law and virtue, conscience and the Bible meet.

CANDLESH.

## Theological Notes and Queries.

#### OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

#### *Queries to be answered.*

1.—Are Satan and sin inseparable !—that is, are they in the relation of cause and effect ? Or, would sin cease to exist amongst men if Satan were bound ?

QUÆRE VERUM.

2.—We have evidences of preaching during the Mosaic dispensation, although not, perhaps, during the patriarchal. What was the subject-matter, or object of

preaching, before the present dispensation ?—H.

3.—We hear much of missionary effort ; but what, however, is the most effective agency for reaching that large and growing class of people around us, who, whilst they are highly gifted in circumstances and in intellect, never attend our places of worship, co-operate not with Christian workers, and call not Christ, Master ?

IN SOLO DEO SALUS.

## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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**THE SYNTAX AND SYNONYMS OF THE GREEK TESTAMENT.** By WILLIAM WEBSTER, M.A., late Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, recently of King's College, London. London : Rivingtons.

It was said by an old English philosopher, that words are the counters of wise men and the money of fools. The saying has been reversed by a great living theologian, who thinks that they are the counters of fools and the money of wise men. Were it necessary to choose between them, we should incline to the modern reversion of the saying. Yet the opposition is more in sound than in sense. All that Thomas Hobbes intended, was a caution against the careless inattention to the meaning of words which often beguiles men into error; and what Archbishop Trench intends, is to point out the value of words as vehicles of thought. Like bees, these winged words are laden with riches, the spoil of earth's choicest gardens and of paradise itself.

Words, as the means of revelation, are of the highest importance to the true theologian; and we lightly esteem the theology of any man who has not given them his most careful attention. Theology is not a growth of the human mind, but the tracing of a Divine river from its rise in Eden to its present majestic dimensions. As well might a geologist be ignorant of the characteristics of the various strata, as a theologian of words. It is most sad to remember how men have theorized on Christian doctrine with a neglect of the authoritative documents themselves; how they have built their pyramids in an inverted position—base in the high air and apex resting on some misunderstood text, perhaps on an auxiliary verb of the English Bible. It was only the other day we heard that the head of a whole school of divines in America, who is regarded as an oracle by many in England, was unable to read his Greek Testament.



Believing, as we do, that theology cannot exist where the original Scriptures are not studied, and that the very diction of Scripture is one of the most forcible proofs of its Divine origin, we hail every successful worker in this field as rendering high service to the Church of his generation.

The author of the volume before us is not unknown to our readers. We have often directed attention to the very admirable Greek Testament on whose title-page his name stands as the first joint editor. The "Homilist" itself has been enriched by a series of suggestive articles in the department of Sacred Philology proceeding from his accomplished pen.

Our satisfaction with the present work is very great. The author has earned the gratitude of all real theological students. Were there in our language works in every department of sacred literature written with the same degree of ability and learning, the need of sending across the German Ocean for helps in Biblical lore would cease. For value of information, for method and condensation, we far prefer this volume to Winer, or any other similar vaunted German authority. We venture to predict that it will soon become an acknowledged standard work, and be regarded as indispensable among the furniture of the Biblical student.

In the preliminary chapter on the Peculiarities of Hellenistic Greek, Mr. Webster considers that the language spoken by Jesus was not Greek but Syriac, and that Greek was acquired by most of the writers of the New Testament at mature age. With this opinion, though not to the full disciples of Diodati, we are not prepared wholly to coincide. We think that the Gospels afford at least apparent proofs of the common use of both languages in Palestine at the time of our Lord. Mr. Webster considers—and he is probably right—that the Hebraistic element in the New Testament has, from deficient scholarship, been greatly over-rated by some. The language of the New Testament is that great Common Dialect, which had been carried, and modified as it was carried, to countries east and west of Greece Proper, included within a vast circumference. There is in this Dialect, as found in the New Testament, a Hebrew element and an Alexandrine. There is also a Christian element, arising from the necessities of a new revelation, for new words, and new senses for old ones. It should also be remembered that the style is colloquial, rather than literary; the diction often rather that of conversation than of composition. Long speeches are recorded in the Acts, and many of the Epistles were written from dictation, a fact which may account for the numerous unfinished sentences and abrupt transitions of St. Paul.

After this general chapter, we have eight which are purely grammatical. That on the Formation of Words is peculiarly valuable. Indeed from all of them the student may obtain an inestimable instrument in New Testament Hermeneutics, and the textual illustrations of the principles expounded are often surprising and delightful, in the vividness

with which one is helped to perceive the exact force of the expressions which are used. Sometimes a text which has vexed the commentators for ages, and about which you may in vain consult the Fathers, has an unexpected light thrown upon it. Take, for instance, that of John xx. 17, *μὴ μου ἄπτον, κ. τ. λ.* "Do not fasten on me . . . do not continue to cling to me, for I have not yet ascended; but proceed to my brethren, and tell them that I am about to ascend." (pp. 75, 93.)

But while the electric light of sound philology is thus flashed on many passages, there are cases in which our author's remarks do not always produce conviction. One of these is the celebrated passage, Phil. ii. 6. We do not refer to the admirable remark on *ὑπαρχων* (p. 199), nor to the exposition of *μορφή* (p. 222), which is preferable to the Patristic explanation of Suicer; but to the account given of *ἀρπαγμὸν* on p. 248. According to Mr. Webster's own rule, "Nouns in *μορς* express the action of the verb proceeding from the subject; the action and its result." There is nothing in the context to prevent our taking *ἀρπαγμός* as the action of the verb, and we are quite content with the word "robbery" which is used in the authorized version. There is not a hint in the authorized version, or in the Greek, about *claiming*, as some seem to suppose. The literal translation is:—"did not consider equality with God [to be] robbery." In the context, the apostle is exhorting his readers against *ἐριθεία* and *κενοδοξία*, which are kindred with *ἀρπαγμός*, and in favor of *ταπεινοφροσύνη*, which is opposed to it. This exhortation he enforces by the example of Christ Jesus, the grand instance of *ταπεινοφροσύνη*, the grand contradiction of *ἀρπαγμός*. Now, as robbery is snatching something which is not yours, the opposite of it is resigning something which you rightfully possess. Christ Jesus did not consider equality with God to have any connexion with the former, but with the latter. That which originally belonged to Him was the *μορφὴ Θεοῦ*. This He resigned; but He could not resign what He did not possess, and no creature could ever have worn the "form of God." His equality with God was shown by this greatest of all acts of *ταπεινοφροσύνη*. That this is the meaning, appears further from the *ἀλλά*, which indicates transition to the opposite, and finally from the return to the exhortation after this sublime doctrinal digression. As if he had said—Strife and robbery are not Divine; but renunciation of what you rightfully possess, is the true path of honor. Nothing is ever really gained by robbery, but renunciation is rewarded by God.

After this over-long digression, we can only add a few words. The tenth chapter contains fifty pages, and is wholly occupied with the important matter of Synonyms. Here the author has incorporated most that was available in Trench's first series, and has given very much of his own, which is as valuable as anything in Trench. This chapter will not be the least valued by the student, but at least equally

prized with all the rest of the volume. The chapter entitled "Hints on the Authorized Version" abounds with learning and illustration, but we should sometimes differ with the author on questions of taste, on the principle, that alterations should as far as possible preserve the spirit of our incomparable English Bible diction. The last chapter is occupied chiefly with such rhetorical figures as are instanced in the writings of the New Testament. The work is amply furnished with indices. We heartily commend it, and strongly urge all such as desire to be "scribes well instructed," to make it their constant companion, when morning dawns, and when "the quincunx of heaven runs low," until its contents are transferred from the paper to the memory.

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THE LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Translated from the German of J. P. LANGE, D.D. By REV. MARCUS DODS, A.M. In Six Volumes. Vols. IV., V., VI. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke. London Hamilton & Co.

THE first three volumes of this masterly work, we noticed and commended in our May Number of the "Homilist." The three now before us, sustain the judgment we then pronounced. It may be well, in order to give our readers the plan of the work, to allow the author to speak for himself:—"The plan which is to guide the work begun in this volume, bears reference to the foundation, the practical characteristics, and the development of the evangelical history; and hence to its root, its stem, its branches. With respect to the foundation of the Gospel history, the attempt has been made in the present book to furnish a clear representation of two of its essential relations—its relation on the one hand to the ideal and its multiform phenomena, and on the other to criticism. In the second book follows a continuous and synoptic exhibition of the Life of Jesus. In this, I hope to give distinct prominence to the chief particulars of the articulation by which the four Gospels are united into one actual history. In the third and last book, I propose to sketch the Life of Jesus in its broader features, according to that development of its infinite richness which is presented by the peculiar views of each separate Gospel. In this work, the assumption (which is still too widely prevalent) that the essential Gospel history is injured, and has become a spoilt joint-history, will be emphatically opposed. The prejudice that the four accounts are the source of a want of unity, will be met by the proof that they rather exhibit the richness of this unity. If the Lord give me health and strength, the execution of this work shall not be destroyed." We trust that a scheme of thought reaching so far and deep into all that is vital in our faith, will secure what it deserves—the profoundest study of every minister of Christ.

THE COLLECTED WRITINGS OF EDWARD IRVING. In Five Volumes.  
 Edited by his Nephew, REV. G. CARLYLE, M.A. Vol. II. London:  
 Alexander Strahan & Co.

HERE is another splendid volume of the writings of the renowned Edward Irving. As a writer, Irving reminds us more of Milton than any other English author with whom we are acquainted. His thoughts are as far-reaching, his imagery oftentimes as majestic, his language as affluent, his style as stately, but less involved and more pointed, his spirit as sublimely reverential and incorruptibly honest. There is no preacher like him in these days. His very eccentricities and extravagances had a divinity about them: they stand in crushing contrast with the studied singularities of some of the smaller pulpiteers of this age, whose whole life seems a wooing for popularity. He had the eye of the seer, the heart of the reformer, the tongue of the orator, the fire that burns only in the true prophet of the Lord. We thank Mr. Carlyle, the able editor, for his efforts in adding to the best literature of the world.

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MEMOIRS OF JOSEPH STURGE. By HENRY RICHARDS. London: S. W. Partridge; and A. W. Bennett.

THIS is a refreshing book. It revives a waning faith in one's species, and arrests the progress of cynicism. Who that has an eye to peer into the spirit of society and a heart honestly to labor for the common good, has not often felt his inspiration for benevolent labor droop in the presence of the hollow professors of religion, the miserable time-servers, the mercenary grubs, and the base flunkies, that abound in almost every circle he enters? The life of such a man as Joseph Sturge comes to the help of such; it is like a breath of life from the eternal world, a ray that shoots across our path, bidding us step on in the hope of brighter hours. Merchants should study his life. He was a "Successful Merchant" of a far higher type, we think, than the hero of a book bearing this title. A successful merchant is not one who merely accumulates great wealth. Villainy can beat virtue in building up fortunes; nor is he one who merely gives large portions of his immense profits to religious and charitable institutions. This may be often done to placate conscience or to further the ends of business as an advertisement. A successful fortune-maker may be a moral bankrupt. Money-making, with a true successful merchant, as in the case of Joseph Sturge, is a means of grace. The process was religious, soul-developing, and ennobling. Philanthropists should study his life. His philanthropy was no narrow sympathy; it overleaped all distinctions of race, country, sect, and embraced mankind; it was the spirit of his religion and the queen of his patriotism. His philanthropy was not mere sentiment, expending itself in platform talk and occasional subscriptions. It was a life with him. His philanthropy

was not a blind impulse. There are those who assume the name of philanthropists, who do immense harm to the sacred cause for the want of capacity to see the Divine path in which benevolence should flow. Some are such fools that they employ one evil to destroy another. War, for instance, the concentration of all enormities, is sanctioned in order to terminate the abominations of slavery. Weak-minded philanthropists are social pests. We heartily commend this book to young men especially. The talented biographer has done his work with appreciative sympathy, honest discrimination, healthy philanthropic aspirations, profound acquaintance with the spirit and wants of his age, and characteristic humility.

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THE COMPLETE WORKS OF RICHARD SIBBES, D.D. By the Rev. ALEXANDER B. GROSART. Vol. VII. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet & Co.

THIS volume concludes the whole of the single sermons not already given, and all of the remaining writings of Dr. Sibbes. We have already pronounced our opinion upon this author. The learned editor's characterization strikes us as very faithful. "For Sibbes, then, is not claimed the title of 'great,' so much abused, and indeed vulgarized, in the world's meaning. Weighed against contemporaries—Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton—he has no awful crown of genius. Placed beside other divines, Church and Puritan, he lacks the orient splendor of Jeremy Taylor, the massiveness of Barrow, the intensity of Baxter, the unexpected wit of Thomas Goodwin; nor has he left behind him any great work such as that on 'The Creed' by Pearson, or the 'Defensio' by Bull. In reading him we never come upon recondite speculation, wide-reaching generalization, sustained argument, burning eloquence, flashes of wit, aphoristic wisdom, not even, or but rarely, melody of words. But 'a soul of goodness' informs every fibre and filament of his thinking; nor is there a page without food for the spiritually hungry. He has few equals, and certainly no superior, for ingenuity in bringing comfort to tried, weary, ones, and in happy use of Scripture, his mere citation of a text being like a shaft of light. It should be noticed that the very invariableness of Sibbes's excellence hides his richness and power, as the very commonness of the air makes us forget the wonder and the blessedness of it."

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THOUGHTS ON THE ETERNAL. By Rev. COSMO R. GORDON, M.A., F.R.G.S., F.S.A. Scot. Published by Request. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green.

HERE is a volume of twenty-one discourses, all upon subjects of spiritual interest and eternal moment. We are happy to find that they were delivered to large congregations, for they are worth listening to, and we

are glad to receive them in the printed form of a volume, for they are also worth reading. The man who preaches such sermons as these in the "ordinary course" of his ministry, and amidst the "heavy duties of a large parish and other public engagements," is indeed fulfilling a high mission. They are no common-place productions. Though the sentiments are strictly orthodox, they are often set forth in new and striking aspects. Every page indicates the presence of a Christian philosopher, and a minister in earnest with souls.

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SHAKESPEARE'S KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF THE BIBLE. By CHARLES WORDSWORTH, D.C.L. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

SHAKESPEARE'S position in the mind of the world is a rising one. Once he was only recognized by the profane class; even the more moral of the secular world shrunk from him as one not fit to be their companion, but now he is admitted into the religious sphere. In this book we have a Christian bishop expressing a hope to his own children that they may grow up "readers and lovers of Shakespeare"—And why not; if it be true what the bishop maintains, that Shakespeare was a "diligent and devout reader of the 'Word of God,' and that his own works are 'saturated with Divine wisdom?'" This looks as if one day the plays of this immortal writer would be acted in our churches and cathedrals. How far such a result is to be desired or deprecated is not our question now. The bishop, in this able and learned work, has rendered an important service to the students and admirers of England's renowned bard. He throws much light on many of the doubtful passages of our great dramatist, and shows beyond doubt that he studied the book of inspiration as well as the book of nature.

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THACKERAY, THE HUMORIST AND THE MAN OF LETTERS. The Story of his Life, including a selection from his Characteristic Speeches, now for the first time gathered together. By THEODORE TAYLOR, Esq. With Photograph from Life by ERNEST EDWARDS, B.A., and Original Illustrations. London (Piccadilly): John Camden Hotten.

THIS seasonable volume does not, of course, profess to be the complete biography of such of a man as Thackeray. Yet what it professes to do it does exceedingly well. It satisfies the first desire, which is always felt on the disappearance of a public man, for more lengthened information than can be found in newspaper or magazine. That is to say, it gives an outline of his life, enabling us to trace the development of his peculiar genius from its first unripe attempts to the products of its maturity. The sixteen pages of his speeches constitute one of the most attractive features of the book, which is one that once taken up, will hardly be laid down until finished.

**SYMPATHY.** By REV. DAVID A. DOUDNEY. London: William Macintosh.

He who would look to this book for original thoughts on the truths and ways of God, or for the development of the highest type of manly Christianity, would perhaps be disappointed. Albeit, those who with a simple mind seek for spiritual wisdom and consolation, will leave the perusal of this work improved in mind and heart.

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**THE WIDOW'S OFFERING.** A Sermon by REV. COMPTON BURNETT. London: Judd & Glass.

THIS discourse is founded on the text referring to the widow's mite, and contains the development of the three following lessons, which the author deduces from it:—That according to the Divine plan, the house of God contains a treasury for the reception of secular contributions.—That the secular treasury of God's house is under the continual inspection of heaven.—That the secular treasury of God's house claims a liberal contribution from every worshipper, to withhold which is sin. These thoughts the preacher works out with great brevity, but with considerable force.

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**A PLEA FOR HOLY SCRIPTURE.** By THOMAS GRIFFITH, A.M. London and Cambridge: Macmillan & Co.

THIS is a masterly pamphlet. Though small in compass, it contains a powerful exposition of principles admirably adapted to put down Bibliolatry on the one hand, and Biblioclasm on the other.

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**THE WISDOM OF OUR FATHERS.** Selections from the Writings of LORD BACON. London: Religious Tract Society.

THIS book is made up of selections from the theological, ethical, philosophical, forensic and miscellaneous works of Lord Bacon. Commendation of such a work would be superfluous.

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**THE LAMBS ALL SAFE.** By REV. ALEXANDER B. GROSART. Edinburgh: W. Oliphant & Co. This is a beautiful little work, suited to comfort bereaved parents, from the pen of one of the ablest writers of the day. **THE ENGLISH BIBLE AND ITS TRANSLATORS.** A Lecture. By Rev. JOHN JULIAN. London: William Freeman. A Lecture, full of useful information, interestingly and strikingly given. **THE LIVING GOD AND SAVIOUR OF ALL MEN.** By R. W. DALE, M.A. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. An able Sermon delivered on a great occasion.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Apostolic Patriotism.

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"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above :) Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Who shall believe on him shall not be ashamed."—Rom. x. 1—11.



**S**T. PAUL was not more distinguished as a saint and an apostle, than as a patriot. He was a model one. His patriotism had a philosophy which discovered the cause of his country's evils, and a policy exquisitely fitted to remove them. Without ignoring its temporal interests, or disparaging in any way the importance of its material revenues and political power, his main endeavor was to raise its benighted intellect to light, and turn the mighty current of its moral sympathies into the channel of truth and holiness. It was not



an occasional sentiment with him, it was an abiding and regal force. It did not pass off in chanting national airs or delivering florid speeches; it was with him a "heart's desire and prayer to God." He loved his country, not merely because of the loveliness of its physical scenery or the architectural beauty of its buildings, nor because it was the home of the greatest poets, philosophers, and heroes that the world had ever known; but because of its special connection with that God whose he was, and whom he felt bound to serve—"Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." His patriotism was consistent with true philanthropy; nay, it was a development of it. The passion that inspires men to rifle and ruin other countries in order to aggrandize their own, and which popular ignorance applauds under the name of patriotism, has no affinity whatever with that noble passion which glowed in the heart of our apostle. It is more akin to hell than heaven. The statesman, warrior, king, who injure other nations in order to benefit their own, are no patriots. They violate the eternal rights of man, and therefore, by the settled arrangements of righteous Heaven, bring a ruinous retribution upon the country they foolishly aim to serve. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." They that lead into captivity, must go thither. This is an irrevocable decree in the moral government of the world. All history shows that its operations are as regular as the "ordinances of heaven."

In looking at the text as a revelation of *apostolic patriotism*, we discover three things that are essential to a generous and virtuous love of country.

I. THE APOSTLE'S PATRIOTISM SOUGHT THE HIGHEST GOOD OF HIS COUNTRY. What was that? Augmented wealth, extended dominion, a higher state of intellectual culture? No,

*Salvation.* "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Salvation is the master-theme of the Bible, the great want of the race, and the ultimate design of all God's dispensations with our world. What a universe of blessing the word involves. It implies deliverance from all evil,—from whatever deludes the reason, enslaves the will, enfeebles the faculties, pollutes the conscience, or pains the heart,—from the despotism of evil, the temptations of Satan, the miseries of hell. It implies far more than this. This is but negation. It implies a right state of soul—a soul whose wondrous and various powers are quickened into virtuous action and controlled by righteous principles—a soul, holding a supreme power over its own impulses, and a thorough mastery over all externalities. It implies a state in which every thought shall be true, every emotion felicitous, every act holy, and every scene gleaming with the smiles of an approving God. It implies, in brief, the enjoyment of all that is contained in the word "Heaven"—the throne of God and the Lamb, the ministries of angels, fellowship with the great and the good of all worlds and ages.

Three things are implied in this "heart's desire" of the apostle's patriotism.

First: *A conviction that his countrymen needed salvation.* Their physical blessings were great; his brethren "according to the flesh" lived in a beautiful country. Whatever could delight the senses, or wake true poetry in the soul, was in that goodly land. There rose the mountains sublimely solemn, with the chastened look of centuries;—majestic cedars waved from the heights of Lebanon; Hermon lay glistening and green in living dew; Gilead distributed its healing balm. The Jordan rolled through its centre, receiving into its bosom the springs which had "run among the hills," and wound through the valleys, giving "drink to every beast of the field" and touching all into life. Meadows clad in living green slept at the foot of the hills. The rose looked beautiful in Sharon, and the lily in the valley. The grapes were abundant in Eschol. The barns were filled with plenty, and presses burst

forth with new wine. The softest winds breathed through all, causing the sweetest spices to flow and perfume the air. "The little hills rejoiced" on every side, and the "trees clapped their hands together." Precious fruits were brought forth by the sun, and precious things were put forth by the moon. "It was a land flowing with milk and honey." But his country had more than these temporal blessings, it had the oracles of God, the temple of Jehovah, the Divine order of priesthood, and a religious ritual delineated by God Himself. Yet in spite of all these temporal and religious advantages, the apostle regarded his brethren as *lost*. He looked into the moral heart of his country, and he found that the soul was dead and dark under the dominion of sin and the condemnation of heaven; hence he sought their salvation. Whatever else a country has, if it has not true religion it is lost. This is its great want. Give it this, and every other good will come. All necessary things go with the kingdom of God. Do you deplore the evils of your fatherland, and do you sigh for their removal? The only effective method by which to realize your patriotic wishes, is to promote true godliness. All political and social evils grow out of moral causes, and godliness alone can remove these. It is profitable therefore unto all things; it has the promise of the "life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Another thing implied in this heart's desire of the apostle's patriotism is—

Secondly: *A conviction that the salvation of his countrymen requires the interposition of God.* Why else did he pray? "My heart's desire and prayer to God." The apostle believed in the adaptation of the Gospel which he preached, to convert souls and to effect the spiritual restoration of mankind. He saw in it considerations, as perfect in their fitness as possible to correct the errors, rouse the conscience, convert the souls of men. He speaks of it as the power of God unto salvation. He preached that Gospel, too, with such skill and earnestness as if its success depended upon his own endeavors. Albeit, deep was his conviction that real

efficiency in the work depended upon Divine interposition. His triumphs he ever gratefully ascribed to the agency of God, and the co-operation of that agency was the grand invocation of his most earnest prayers. "I have planted, Apollos watered," &c. However perfect the adaptation of the Gospel and its ministry to the grand end they have in view—that end is never reached apart from the action of the Almighty. This is a truth radiant in every part of the Bible, and this is a truth, the conviction of which has ever deepened in the experience of every true Gospel minister in proportion to the arduousness of his efforts and to the length of his experience. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Another thing implied in the heart's desire of the apostle is—

Thirdly : *A conviction that this interposition of God is to be obtained by intercessory prayer.* He believed in the efficacy of intercessory prayer in attaining the required agency of Heaven. Hence he prays for others : "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." Hence he calls for others to pray for him and his apostolic coadjutors ; "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of God may have free course and be glorified." The power of intercessory prayer is seen in the entreaties of Abraham for the men of Sodom, and in Moses for the rebellious Israelites. I know not how it influences the Almighty, nor why it should ; but I know that it has, and it does, and that it must be employed if human labor in His cause is ever to be crowned with efficiency. Here then is a true patriot—a man who aims at the highest good of his countrymen—its salvation ; and who seeks that end, not only by promoting the Gospel, but by invoking the co-operation of God. The true patriot is a man of prayer. Never did David the king of Israel act more truly a patriot's part than when he breathed this

prayer to heaven:—"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." The apostle's patriotism—

II. RECOGNIZED THE CHARACTERISTIC EVILS OF HIS COUNTRY. Three evils he indicates in these verses:—*corrupt zealotism, ignorance of Christianity, and self-righteousness.* Here is—

First: *Corrupt Zealotism.* "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." He himself had been a Jewish zealot. "After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." He was, therefore, qualified to pronounce a judgment upon it. The zeal he saw his countrymen everywhere manifesting, in connection with the mere letter and ritual of their religion, he regarded as utterly worthless. Zeal in itself is a noble passion, an important element in every undertaking—in the study, the senate, the Church. There is not much success where it is not. But when it is dissociated from intelligence, it is fraught with evils. Zeal, when directed to wrong objects, such as in efforts to pander to the depraved passions of our nature, or in working out ungodly enterprises, is "zeal without knowledge." Zeal, when directed to right objects in wrong proportions, is "zeal without knowledge." He who is more zealous for the things of the body than things of the mind, things of time than things of eternity, or who is more earnest for the letter than the spirit of Christianity, more solicitous for the interest of a sect than for the well-being of a soul, acts from an ignorant zeal. Zeal, when it cannot assign an intelligent reason for its action, is "zeal without knowledge." The man who acts from a religious feeling uncontrolled by reason, is a fanatic doing violence to his nature. This "zeal without knowledge" was one of the cardinal evils amongst the Jews. They crossed sea and land to make proselytes, rather than to make saints. They were far more anxious about the *casket* than the *jewel*, about the externalities of religion than the

realities of truth. Knowledge and zeal should always be associated. The former without the latter, is a well-equipped vessel on a placid sea without the propulsion of steam, billow, or breeze. It may look beautiful as it sleeps on the blue wave, and glistens in the sun, but it can do nothing; it is all but motionless, it will never navigate the ocean, or do the world's business. The latter without the former, is like a bark on the billows with propulsion and no rudder; it may drive on against wind and tide, but it is in jeopardy every hour. Both combined, is like a goodly ship trading from port to port at will, steering clear of dangers, coping gallantly with hostile elements, and fulfilling the missions of its masters. Here is—

Secondly : *Ignorance of Christianity*. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness." By "God's righteousness," here, we understand not that personal rectitude of His character, which in Him is absolute and incorruptible, and which is the standard of excellence throughout the universe, but that *merciful method* by which He makes corrupt men right. What is that method? Here it is in Paul's own language : "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh : that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The intervention of Christ—the Gospel—is the method. This method makes men righteous, causes the righteousness of the Lord to be fulfilled in them. It does something more than getting the sinner pronounced as right by his Maker, reckoned as right in the court of heaven—it *makes men right* / right in themselves, and right in all their relations to society, the universe, and God. Justification is not merely pronouncing men just, but making them just. It is a moral reality, not a legal fiction. The Gospel is a right-making power. It redeems from all iniquity, and teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. Of this method of making men right, the Jews were "ignorant." Ignorance of this is evermore ruinous to man's immortal interests.

Men perish for the lack of this knowledge. In the case of the Jew it was not only ruinous, but culpable. They had the means of knowledge. Their old Scriptures told them in every variety of form that it was by the knowledge of the Messiah that God would justify, make right the nations; that the grand end of the Messiah was to establish judgment—rectitude on the earth. Here is—

Thirdly : *Self-Righteousness*. “They went about to establish their own righteousness.” They considered their own righteousness to consist in their patriarchal descent, and their conformity to the letter of the law. This was their righteousness. In this they gloried as that which distinguished them from all the nations of the earth, and avowed this as all-sufficient to meet the righteous claims of Heaven. The apostle himself once felt this to be his glory. “If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more. Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee.” The Pharisee in the temple was a type of the leading religious sect in Judea, and his language is expressive of its spirit : “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” Here is—

Fourthly : *Gospel rejection*. “Have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” This is the grand result of all other evils, and the crowning sin of all. They have *not* submitted to the righteousness of God. As if the apostle had said, “This is the lamentable fact in their history, this is their ruin.” They not only rejected the personal ministry of the Messiah during His sojourn here, but now when His Gospel is preached to them by His apostles, they will not accept it. They refuse the only Physician that can heal their diseases; the only liberator that can break their fetters, the only priest whose sacrifice will atone for their guilt, whose intercessions can make their peace with Heaven.

Such are some of the evils which Paul as a patriot

discovered and deplored in his country. He is no friend who is blind to my faults, and flatters me for virtues I have not ; and he is no patriot who shuts his eyes to his country's crimes, and pours into her ears the most fulsome eulogies. Such spurious patriotism is common ; it rings in the songs of our laureates and their imitators. It streams in the frothy utterances of the smaller men who occupy seats of office in Church and State. It drops in copious flow from the pen of those hireling scribblers whose journals live by flattering the vanity of a nation's heart. The strains of such bards, the speeches of such officials, the articles of such writers, might lead a stranger to infer that Great Britain was innocent of every crime, the paragon of excellence, and the model of nations. Call not this patriotism ; call it moral obliquity, national egotism, servility, or what you will, but call it not true love of country. The parent who has true love for his children will not only be charmed with their virtues, and delighted with their prosperity, but grieved to the core at their vices, and intensely alive to their sufferings and mishaps. The apostle's patriotism—

III. PROPOSED THE RIGHT METHOD FOR SAVING HIS COUNTRY. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Three great facts seem to be implied in this verse.

First : *That righteousness is essential to the well-being of the people.* The apostle's strong desire is that his brethren should be saved ; that is, made happy here and hereafter ; and his language throughout the chapter, and through a large portion of the epistle, implies that righteousness was essential to that end. There is no true happiness without righteousness. This is his conviction—a conviction which the theology of the Jew would bind him to accept, and which he did accept ; for the apostle takes it for granted that they were struggling after this righteousness as a grand desideratum. And what thoughtful man will deny the harmony of this conviction with Eternal truth ? All the social, political, religious, moral evils under which all men and nations groan, spring from the want



of righteousness. As no individual man can be happy until he has been made thoroughly right in heart, and feel that the Great God treats him as a righteous man, so no people or country can. This rectitude is the only element that can work off all the evils that afflict mankind, and give them the tone and blessedness of a vigorous health. This is the only key-note that can set the discordant elements of the world to music. The righteousness which is essential to the salvation of a soul, is that which alone "exalteth a nation."

Another fact implied in these words is—

Secondly: *That the grand aim of the moral law is to promote righteousness.* Righteousness is the end of the law. "For Moses," says the apostle in the next verse, "describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." The law was holy, just, and good, a transcript of the Divine character, given to man to guide and stimulate him in righteousness. Conformity to it is righteousness in the creature. Angels conform to it and they are righteous. The law reveals and rewards righteousness.

The other fact implied in these words is—

Thirdly: *That the righteousness which the law aimed to promote is to be obtained by faith in Christ.* "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The word "end" here does not mean end in the sense of *termination*, but in the sense of *design*. Christ did not abolish law, on the contrary He fulfilled it. He wrought out its principles in a grand life; He demonstrated its majesty in a wonderful death. Instead of releasing His disciples from obligation to the law, He brings the law to them with a mightier aspect and a greater force of motive. The word therefore, is to be taken in the sense of design. It means that Christ does what the law purposed doing—promote righteousness in man. What the law aimed at, it could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, through the depravity of human nature. Men sinned, and they became unrighteous in fact, and were treated as unrighteous by the government of God. They were brought into condemnation and they felt

n impassable gulf between them and their Maker. The law could do nothing for them; it could neither rectify their errors nor reconcile them to God. Its bright flashes reveal to them their wickedness, and its rumbling thunders prophesy to them their doom. The more profoundly they felt their condition, the more profoundly they felt that by the deeds of the law no flesh living could be justified or made right. Such is the condition of the sinner in relation to law. "The likeliest thing to it in human experience is," says Dr. Chalmers, "when a decree of bankruptcy without a discharge has come forth on the man who has long struggled with his difficulties, and is now irrevocably sunk under the weight of them. There is an effectual drag laid upon this man's activity. The hand of diligence is forthwith slackened, when all the fruits of diligence are thus liable to be seized upon, and that by a rightful claim of such magnitude as no possible strenuousness can meet or satisfy. The processes of business come to a stand, or are suspended when others are standing by ready to devour the proceeds of business so soon as they are realized, or at least to divert them from the use of the unhappy man and the good of his family. The spirit of industry dies within him, when he finds that he can neither make ought for himself, nor from the enormous mass of his obligations make any sensible advance towards his liberation. In these circumstances he loses all heart and all hope for exertion of any sort; and either breaks forth into recklessness or is chilled into inactivity by despair. And it is precisely so in the case of a sinner towards God. If he feels as he ought, he feels as if the mountains of his iniquities had separated him from his Maker. There is the barrier of an unsettled controversy between them, which, do his uttermost, he cannot move away; and the strong though secret power of this is a chief ingredient in the lethargy of nature. There is a haunting jealousy of God which keeps us at a distance from Him. There is the same chilling forgetfulness of Him, that there is of any other painful or disquieting object of contemplation. God, when viewed rightly as the Lawgiver, is also viewed as the Judge who must

condemn, as the rightful creditor whose payments or whose penalties are alike overwhelming. We are glad to make our escape from all this dread and discouragement, into the sweet oblivion of nature. The world becomes our hiding place from the Deity, and in despair of making good our eternity by our works, we work but for the interests of time; and because denizens of earth, we, estranged from the hopes of heaven, never once set forth in good earnest upon its preparation."

At this point the apostle's method of making the sinner righteous comes in. What is that? *Faith in Christ*. "Every one that believeth" in Him is made righteous—"Believeth!" in what? Not in what men say about Him; not merely in the facts of His life, and the purpose of His mission, but in Him as the all-sufficient Saviour of the world. "Believeth!" How? Not with a mere traditional faith, but with the deepest conviction of the soul. Not merely with the intellect, but with the heart. "*With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.*" Believeth with a faith that brings Christ's own Spirit home to us, and gives us a new heart and a new life. This is the power to make men righteous—the power by which man obtains pardon for his past offences, and an effective influence enabling him to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

Did Paul's patriotism recognize the right method, think you? I believe that the philosophy of the human mind, and the history of human experience, unite with the Bible in declaring that it is the *only* method that can succeed. I depreciate not for a moment some of the salutary elements that are at work in the world, such as intellectual education, scientific discoveries, wholesome legislation, and a healthful class of literature; whilst I maintain that all will prove utterly abortive apart from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the power of God unto salvation. Let those who aspire to the name of patriots, imitate Paul in the instrumentality he employed to raise his country. The advance of our England in all that gives real worth, nobility, and happiness to a people, depends upon the multiplication of patriots after the type of Paul.

## Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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positions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, as described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But one of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. Empty at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all the critical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any archaeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss the chief which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reach its spiritual results.

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### SECTION TWELFTH.—Acts iv. 23—37.

being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all which the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they stood up, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that is therein : who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things ? The earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy Son Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done now, Lord, behold their threatenings : and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching out thy hand to heal ; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together ; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul : neither said any of them that ought of the things which were added was his own ; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any lack among them : for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet : and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the

apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet."—Acts iv. 23—37.

SUBJECT :—*A Specimen of Christian Socialism.*

**T**HE apostles Peter and John having baffled the Sanhedrim in its attempts violently to restrain them in their mission to extend the knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth, return at once to the company of their fellow-disciples. The passage which comes now for our consideration, is a brief narrative of their return to the society of their brotherhood, the profound feelings with which the brotherhood received their communications, the spirit which inspired the body, and their thorough communion both in religious sentiment and in common life. The narrative gives us such a view of *Christian Socialism* as throws the secular thing called by that name into contempt, and reveals the lamentable imperfection connected even with the highest form of spiritual fellowship now existing on this earth. From it we learn that the socialism which these first Christians enjoyed was *attractive, religious, and amalgamating*. It was:—

I. ATTRACTIVE. No sooner were the two apostles free, than they returned at once—as if drawn by a magnetic force—to their chosen society. “And being let go, they went to their own company.” They “*went to their own* :”—Their own people, friends, or brethren ; those who were one with them in the most vital things of existence. There were two things that made “*their own*” people attractive to them, and which are always found in connection with true Christian Socialism—*responsive listening* and *sympathetic co-operation*. They had something to say, and they felt that in that brotherhood they should have responsive listeners. They wanted to report all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. Whether they wished to “report” this to awaken the congratulations of their brethren on account of their triumphs, or to get their counsels on account of their difficulties, or both, you have no data to

determine with certainty. We know this, however, that there is a law of mind which urges a man to communicate that to others to which he attaches some great importance, and the more pressing the thing is in its nature the more forcible is that law. It is also a law to seek the most responsive listeners to such communications. To the men who will give us the most cordial listening, we go with the thing we have to say, rather than to those who are hostile or even indifferent. Hence, naturally, these apostles went to "*their own*" to report that to which they attached such moment. There, they knew they would have open ears and receptive hearts. True Christian Socialism involves this responsive listening. There, the speaking brother whose heart is full, will find an audience all candor and love. Such a thing as this is not found in secular socialism. There, you have the cavilling and the captious. Nor is it often found, alas, in the fellowship of churches. There, is too frequently the prejudice that deafens the ear and closes the heart.

The other thing which made their "own company" attractive to them, and which is always found in true Christian Socialism, was *sympathetic co-operation*. So strong is our social nature, that we instinctively crave the sympathy of others to enable us to bear our burdens and discharge our mission. Without this, the strongest of us are weak either to endure or to toil. Without the breeze of social sympathy, the sails of our spirits would collapse in the voyage of duty. Peter and John had been engaged in a severe struggle, and had suffered much; and naturally did their hearts turn to that circle which was in thorough sympathy with their sentiments and aims. All the while they were battling with the Sanhedrim, and the night they spent in prison, they knew that their "own company" were thinking of and praying for them, and to their fellowship they hastened the moment they were "*let go*." In true Christian Socialism there is always a deep, genuine sympathy in all, with everything connected with the cause of God in truth. There is a weeping with those that weep, a rejoicing with those that rejoice. What one feels in fact, the other feels in sympathy.

Thus, the Christian Socialism of these early times was an attractive thing. Kindred souls flowed to it as rivers to the sea. What circle on earth is more attractive to kindred spirits than the circle in which there is a common object of supreme affection, a common class of dominant thoughts, a common cause engrossing the chief activities of being? This is the ideal of Christian fellowship. Would it were realized on earth, and that every church were a true home of love.

From the narrative we learn that the socialism of these first Christians was—

II. RELIGIOUS. "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is : who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?" &c. This whole passage, which extends through several verses, shows that a *profound religiousness* pervaded every member of that "company." Godliness was the vital air that fanned the lungs of their spiritual being. "They were filled with the Holy Ghost." God was the grand fact in their consciousness, the one centre in their hearts. In their horizon He stood as the one majestic object to which they traced all the beauty and the goodness they beheld. Their religiousness here comes out in two forms—that of *description*, and that of *supplication*. In their ascription there is a recognition of several things.

First : *There is their recognition of His authority.* "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God. The word here rendered "*Lord*," is *Δέσποτα*, not *Κύριε*. From it our English word "despot" is taken, and it stands for authority that is absolute. Deeply did this company now feel the absoluteness of the Divine control.

Secondly : *There is their recognition of His creatorship.* "Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is." They felt Him to be not merely the Sovereign Lord of all things, but the Almighty Maker.

Thirdly : *There is their recognition of His revelation.* "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ." This quotation, which is from the second Psalm, shows their conviction that David there spoke not by his own wisdom, or of himself, but by the inspiration of God concerning the Great Messiah. What David said on this point, was Divine revelation concerning the opposition of worldly authorities to the Lord and His Christ. The words contain several things concerning the hostility of worldly men to Christ. *Furiousness.* "The heathen rage." The word ἐφρόαζαν, designates the neighing or snorting of highly-excited horses—horses excited somewhat like the pawing, prancing war-horse in the book of Job. It is metaphorically used, to represent the noise and fury of insolent and overbearing men, and well designates the furious temper and the insolence of Christ's enemies towards Him. *Vanity.* They "imagine vain things." Those who aspire to thwart the plans of Christ, to crush Christianity, live in a region of mad dreams. They are agents of consummate folly, and must fall victims to their own delusions. *Combination.* "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together." They were banded together against Christ. Ungodly men, that differ widely in other things, are one in their antagonism to Christ.

Fourthly : *There is their recognition of His predestination.* They regarded Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, the people of Israel, and all the enemies of Christ, as wicked agents blindly and unconsciously working out the eternal plans of Heaven. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." He who sees the end from the beginning, conducts the government of the universe after a pre-concerted plan, so vast that it comprehends alike things of the greatest magnitude and minuteness. Nothing can ever occur that is not in that plan,



and the most hellish spirit can do no more than contribute his part towards it. How great is God! He maketh His enemies do His work.

Their religiousness comes out not only in their *ascription*, but in their *supplication*. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." Mark the substance of their prayer. They invoked *personal protection*. "Behold their threatenings." The threatenings refer to those contained in the 17th and 21st verses of the chapter—threatenings addressed by the rulers to the apostles. The meaning of the invocation, "Behold their threatenings," may be, "Guard those who are the objects of those threatenings, and thus frustrate the evil designs of our enemies."

They invoked the *power of spiritual usefulness*. "That with all boldness they may speak thy word." Though they pray for personal protection, it is only as a means to discharge their official functions. They wanted their lives preserved, not because they dreaded the death of martyrdom, not because of themselves, but because they had a paramount desire to be successful promoters of the new religion.

They invoked *miraculous interposition*. "By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." The meaning is, "Enable us to work miracles in the name of Christ, that we may be more successful in spreading abroad the knowledge of Christ." This power Christ had promised (Mark xvi. 17, 18), and they had an authority, therefore, to seek it.

Such is the beautiful prayer, the spirit of which is this, "Deliver us from our enemies, and grant us miraculous power, not for our own gratification or aggrandizement, but in order that we may speak the word of God with greater fluency and force."

Mark the *success* of the prayer. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled

together ; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

In the answer there was a *miraculous sign*. "The place was shaken where they were assembled together." perhaps they were in the same as that in which they were assembled on the day of Pentecost (chap. ii. 2), of which this scene was a partial repetition. The sign here given of God's presence was familiar to the saints of the Old Testament. (Exod. xix. 18, Ps. lxxviii. 8.) "The special presence of the Holy Ghost is accompanied with a sign to the senses—an earthquake as before, with, probably, the appearance of flame. Both phenomena are mentioned by Virgil as marks of Divine favor. Coincidences between the facts of revelation and the opinions and superstitions of the heathen world, occur too frequently to be accounted for by the supposition that they are accidental. Such resemblances seem to admit one of two solutions ; either that God condescended to use methods which men had already without authority supposed Him to use, or that men *had* an authority for so believing, viz., a tradition which was derived to them from a distant age, through some unknown channel. The former hypothesis seems better to account for the appearance of the star to the Magi ; the latter will apply to the present passage, to chap ii. 3, 19, and to the Gentile anticipations of the incarnation." \*

In the answer there was the *impartation of Divine power*. They were all "filled." The remarks made on the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost are applicable here.† The power which they sought to preach the Gospel, came. "They spake the word of God with boldness."

Such, then, are the forms of *ascription* and *supplication* in which their religiousness was expressed on this occasion. A feature in their devotions worth noticing is—their *thorough unity*. They were all "with one accord." Some have asked, How could it have been with one accord ? Did they all use

\* Webster and Wilkinson.

† See "Homilist," Vol. III., Third Series, p. 69.

these words as a part of a liturgy which they had amongst them, or did they all receive a special inspiration prompting in all hearts the same aspirations, thoughts, and words? Or did one inspired voice lead the devotions, and express the common thought and desire of all? It scarcely matters; sufficient is it for us to know that there was perfect unity in the worship.

From the narrative we learn the Christian Socialism of the first Christians was—

III. AMALGAMATING. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." The inspired writers had not that dread of repetition in their productions which belong to modern authors. The community of goods here recorded, Luke has stated before in the previous chapter. He repeats it, perhaps, in order that we may dwell on the extraordinary state of Christian society at that time, or in order to show that however tumultuous and violent were the rage of their enemies, there was a blessed peace and a sensible security amongst themselves. Outward tempests produced no ripple on their social stream. God was in the midst of them and they rejoiced. Four thoughts are suggested in relation to the amalgamating force.

First: *It was most hearty and practical.* The thorough unity of soul expressed itself in the surrender of every member's worldly possessions for the common good. The definition of friendship ascribed to Aristotle by Diogenes Laertius, which stated that it consists in one soul residing in two bodies, is actualized here. They were of "one soul," and all the members of the body united in acting out the common volition. "Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own." What was once their private property they call no more their own, they regard it as the common possession of the brotherhood. The rising tide of brotherly affection bore away from their hearts that love of gain which is a power in all unconverted men, and which has

grown into a passion in this age, making mammon the God of the world. This surrender of personal interest was not only the expression of thorough unity, but the best method of preserving it. It is the narrow and the mean that disorganize society, and bring all the members of the social system into conflict and confusion.

Secondly: *It consisted with a diversity of position and service.* On this occasion, where we read of their all being *one soul*, and having a community of goods, we have an account of the apostles bearing witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and of their having placed at their disposal the common property. "As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." The name of one is especially mentioned who did this, "Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet." He is singled out here because he was a man of distinction, and was to play an important part in the history of the future of the young Church. These verses show a diversity of position and service in that social circle that was so united in soul. *The apostles were both the spiritual and economical heads of that community.* Material bodies may get so thoroughly amalgamated as to lose all their individual peculiarities, and be fused into one common mass. Not so with souls. Minds, however closely welded together by social love, will retain for ever their individuality of being, position and mission. Though the body is moved by one soul, the eye is still the eye, and the hand the hand. Social unity is not at all the uniformity of a regiment moving with one step and attired in the same garb, but rather like the variety of landscape, each object clad in its own costume and bending to the breeze according to its own structure and style. It is not the sound of one monotonous note, but the echo of all the varying notes of being, brought into sweetest harmony.

Thirdly : *It was produced by the gracious favor of heaven.* "Great grace was upon them all." Grace means favor (John i. 16), and the favor here may mean either the favor with which they were regarded by men, or the favor which they had received from God. Grace was upon them all in the two senses; the latter is the idea most probably here. The grace or love of God was the effect of that love and liberality which existed amongst them. We must feel God's love towards us before we can feel true love to our brethren. Piety is the parent of philanthropy. God's grace it is that brings souls into loving harmony. No social contracts, no code of rules, no uniformity of belief can do it; it must be the love of God consuming our native selfishness, and opening those Divine fountains of sympathy within us which sin has sealed. Let this great grace come upon all the Churches now, and such a holy unity will exist amongst them, that they will have favor from all the world, and mighty power in bearing "witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."

Such is the phase of Christian Socialism which we have in this narrative. In what a sublime contrast does it stand to all the socialism of the world, and how does it show, too, the imperfection of even the highest Christian Socialism now existing in the Church. Where is that *attractive religious amalgamating socialism* now? Would that there were on one spot of this earth a circle, however small, where it was perfectly and fully unfolded. Who would not admire it—what heart would not feel its attractions. It would be the heavenly Jerusalem in miniature. It would be an Eden in the world's social desert.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
For brethren to dwell together in unity;  
It is like the precious ointment upon the head,  
That ran down upon the beard, *even Aaron's beard* :  
That went down to the skirts of his garments;  
As the dew of Hermon,  
And as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion;  
For there the Lord commanded the blessing,  
*Even life for evermore.*"

## Gems of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*Heaven's Description of the Sainted Dead.*

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yes, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Fifty-eighth.

**H**ERE is a voice from heaven. Voices from earth are plentiful; they load our air and din our ears. We have voices from the market and voices from the Parliament, voices from the Church and voices from the college, voices on every subject and in every key. They are contradictory and unsatisfactory; they solve not the deepest problems of the soul. Thank God there is a voice from Heaven; let us listen to it. It comes from Infallibility itself, and teaches the most momentous questions of interest and destiny. Notice—

I. HEAVEN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTER OF THE SAINTED DEAD. They "die in the Lord." Their character was that of vital union with Christ. The Scriptures represent this union by a great variety of figure. It is compared to the union of a building with its foundation stone—its existence depends upon it; to that of the branch and the vine—its strength, foliage, fruit, life, of the one, depend upon the sap it derives from the other; to that of the spirit and the body—the former being the source of animation, the impulse of activity, and the guide of the movements of the latter. These figures confessedly indicate a union the most close, and the most vital. This union may include two things—

First: *Their existence in His affections.* We live in the hearts of those who love us. Children so thoroughly live in the affections of their loving parents, that they control their plans and inspire their efforts. Because the child lives in

the heart of the affectionate parent, the parent lives and labors for his child. In this sense, Christ's disciples live in Him; they are in His heart; He thinks upon them; He plans for them; He works for them; He causes all things to work together for their good. This union may include—

Secondly: *Their existence in His character.* Without figure, we live in the character of those we admire and love. Arnold's most loyal pupils live in his character now. We see their old master in their books, and hear him in their sermons. Christ is the grand object of their love, and the chief subject of their thought, and to please Him was the grand purpose of their life. As loving children identify themselves with all that pertains to their parents, so they feel a vital interest in all that relates to the cause of Christ. Thus Paul felt. "I live," said he, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This character implies two things. (1) A moral change. Men are not born in this state. "If any man is in Christ he is a new creature." The change is so great that the man must be conscious of it. This character implies—(2) A judicial change. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Their sins are pardoned; their iniquities are forgiven, they "have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Such is the character of the sainted dead as here described. "They die in the Lord." Notice—

II. HEAVEN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CONDITION OF THE SAINTED DEAD. "*Blessed* are the dead," &c.

First: *Their blessedness is in rest from all trying labor.* Not rest from work, for work is the condition of blessedness; but from all trying labor, all anxious toil, all wearying, annoying, irritating, fruitless toil. (1) Rest from all trying labor pertaining to our *physical subsistence*. By the sweat of our brow here we have to eat bread. Not so yonder. (2) Rest from all trying labor pertaining to *intellectual culture*. How much trying labor is there here to train our faculties, and to get knowledge. Much study is a weariness to the

Not so yonder. (3) Rest from all trying labor pertaining to our *spiritual cultivation*. Here we have to wrestle, against our spiritual foes, and often have to cry out in struggle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Not so yonder. (4) Rest from all trying labor to *benefit our fellow-men*. To do good is a trying work. The ignorance, the callousness, the attitude of men whom we seek to help, often distract and weary the heart. Not so yonder. Rest! What a cheering rest! It is the couch of the weary traveller, it is the haven of the storm-tossed mariner, it is the home for the veteran after many a battle has won the victory.

Truly: *Their blessedness is in the influence of their works.* "For their works do follow them." No one act truly done for God, and in His spirit, will be lost. All good works springing from faith in Christ, shall follow the worker into the next world—follow him in their blessed influence upon himself, in the happy results they have produced in others, and in the gracious acknowledgment of God. The moment we appear on the other side, we shall hear the voice addressing us, *Call the laborers and give them their hire*. We shall find that the smallest effort is not lost.

Truly: *Their blessedness begins immediately after death.* "From henceforth, saith the Spirit." From the moment of death the blessedness begins. This stands opposed to two errors.

(1) That there is an obliviousness of soul until the resurrection. And to the error—(2) That there are purgatories which must follow death. "From henceforth." Not the waking of the soul into consciousness after the sleep of centuries; not from the extinction of purgatorial fires—but death. "To day shalt thou be with me;" "Absent from the body: present with the Lord."

Truly: *Their blessedness is vouched by the Spirit of God.* "From henceforth, saith the Spirit." Who declares this blessedness? An erring Church? Not even the highest angel. THE SPIRIT; He who knows the present and future; He who hears the last sigh of every saint on earth, and his



first note of triumph. The Spirit saith it. Let us believe it with an unquestioning faith. The Spirit saith it: let us adore Him for His revelation.

This subject speaks *comfort* to the bereaved. Weep not inordinately for the good that are gone. Sorrow not as those who are without hope. Your loved ones still live; they "rest from their labours and their works do follow them." The subject speaks *courage* to the faint. You disciples of the Lord who feel the journey of life to be trying; the battle to be severe; and feel at times depressed—take heart; yet a little while all your trials will be over. You shall "rest from your labours; and your works shall follow you." *Go thou thy way until the end be, and thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.*

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SUBJECT:—*Church Members: the Seemingly Feeble, the Vitally Necessary.*

"Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary."—1 Cor. xii. 22.

*Analysis of Chapter the Six Hundred and Fifty-ninth.*

**T**HE church at Corinth was a church in a state of faction. Contentions amongst its members were rife, touching the merits of different teachers and the superiority of different gifts. Much of these epistles, and the whole of this chapter, bear against that wretched spirit of dissension. For this purpose, in this chapter he shows that the true Church, like the human body, has amongst its members *variety, unity, and dependence*. The variety springs from a diversity of gifts sovereignly distributed by the Eternal Spirit. These endowments were of three classes—*miraculous, native, and attained*. All men differ in their endowments; no two are alike. This variety characterizes all the works of God, is the grandest feature of their beauty. In the Church's landscape there are plants of all kinds and gradations, from the frail flower to the tall cedars of Lebanon, all fed by the same elements, and shone on by the same sun. In connection with

all the variety, there is essential unity. One heart beats in all, one soul animates all. The apostle intimates that the true Church is as thoroughly one as the human body. What the body is to the soul, Christ is to the Church—its temple, organ, symbol. Uniformity is not unity. The apostle shows, moreover, that there is a mutual dependence through all. One member of the body depends upon another, and is vital to the whole; one cannot say to the other, "I have no need of thee." And in the text he says that even the seemingly feeble is the more necessary.

From the text we infer—

**I. THAT THE TRUE CHURCH HAS MEMBERS SEEMINGLY FEEBLE.** There are two classes of church members who to the material eye seem feeble.

First: *Those who are destitute of that to which the world attaches the idea of power.* Great wealth is power in the world's estimation, and he that is without it is feeble. The vast majority of Christians have been, and still are, destitute of this. Not a few in all ages have been amongst the poorest of the poor. The carnal eye cannot see much strength or worth where there is poverty. The highest and most perfect form of excellence that ever appeared on this earth, appeared in the form of worldly destitution; hence Christ appeared as a root out of a dry ground, without form or comeliness. *High officialism* is power in the estimation of the world. It sees power in the general marshalling his armies, in the statesman guiding the destinies of his country, in the monarch whose will moves the nations. A small amount of piety in such quarters is seen, magnified, and lauded at once. One simple act of goodness wrought by him who rules an empire, shall be chronicled in every journal, beat in the song of the laureate, and be rung by the trumpet of fame half the world over; but a long life of goodness and devotion down in the region of obscurity where many Christians live, passes away unnoticed and unpraised. It seems feeble. *Great mental endowments* are power in the estimation of the world. Power is seen in

him who can compose music like Handel, write books like Shakspeare, or fulminate words like Demosthenes. Goodness in such men will be soon recognized. The majority of Christians are not often blessed with such endowments, and, therefore, however good, they seem feeble.

The class of Christians who seem feeble are—

Secondly : *Those who work out their mission in a quiet and unostentatious spirit.* Most Christians, and all who have most of the spirit of their Master, of all grades of life and degrees of endowment, thus work. The most powerful things are the most silent. The stream of life in spring runs up through the veins of every herb and plant, blade and tree, covering every zone of the earth with verdure and with beauty, silently and unheard. Gravitation wheels suns and systems about immensity without noise. In this quiet way true goodness works, and therefore it is often deemed feeble.

From the text we infer—

II. THAT THE SEEMINGLY FEEBLE MEMBERS ARE VITALLY NECESSARY. "Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary." The comparison here is not between Christians and unconverted persons, but between Christians themselves, between members of the same church, between that class of members who are distinguished for great endowments, and between those who have no such distinctions. Paul's language implied that he believed they were both "*necessary*." It is very important to have men of great endowments in connection with the Church, men of learning, men of eloquence. Such men have often rendered signal service in the cause of truth. But men of pre-eminent piety, whose piety and not their endowments, are their distinction, are even *more necessary*. The general thought, perhaps, is, *that spiritual excellence is more necessary in the cause of Christianity, than mental or any other endowments.* Great piety, with feeble endowments, is more necessary than brilliant endowments with little piety. The strong leg, the sinewy arm, the broad brow, the flashing eye, are to the body

what splendid endowments are to the Church, the most attractive and imposing. But the brain, the lungs, the heart, those feeble unseen members, are to the body what piety is to the Church, the most essential to its existence. The body may live without arm, leg, eye, but not without those vital organs. The Church may get on without great endowments, but dies without piety.

First : *Great piety is more "necessary" to the individual himself than great endowments.* Great endowments not only often exist apart from piety, but often militate against it ; they often tend to foster pride, and elate with vanity. Genius often lights a torch that leads the soul astray. Men are saved, without great endowments, but never without piety.

Secondly : *Great piety is more "necessary" to the Church than great endowments.* Great talents in the Church must not be underrated. We thank God that He gives His Church in every age some men of power. These rise like mountains in the midst of it. They are not only a shelter and defence, but they catch the first beams of the morning, and send them down ; the first showers from the clouds, and pour them into the valleys. Albeit, the Church owes more to signal piety than to their influence. It is not the exegesis of the scholar, the reasonings of the philosopher, the eloquence of the orator, or the strains of the bard, that have done most for the Church, but the holy lives, the earnest prayers, the lovely spirit of humble saints.

Thirdly : *Great piety is more "necessary" to the world than great endowments.* What does society require most at the present moment ? New chapters in the book of science, new statutes in the codes of law, new inventions in the sphere of art, new openings in the field of trade ? No ! but more living excellence, more embodied piety. This is the salt which can alone prevent its corruption, the intercessory breath that can avert its threatened doom, the light that can reveal to all the path of peace. At the last day it will be found that the world's benefactors were the obscure sons of piety and prayer. The practical thoughts rising from this subject show that

*the conditions of our highest interests are available to all.* If our well-being and influence for good depended upon great talents, the case of the millions would be hopeless, but consisting as it does in simple goodness, all can attain the happiness they seek. The subject urges us to recognize and reverence goodness wherever seen. See it in the humblest cottage, and in a frame worn and wan with poverty; and, seeing it, honor it as a ray from "The Father of Lights."



SUBJECT :—*Divine Influence.*

"I shall be as the dew unto Israel."—Hosea xiv. 5.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixtiety.*

**I**SRRAEL had sinned; he had departed from God, nevertheless God proclaimed Himself merciful and gracious towards him. For He says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel." The dew here referred to, as we apprehend it, is the beautiful emblem of Divine grace.

I. Divine influence, like the dew, is **UNSEEN**. The dew steals down to the earth, and the most careful observer cannot see it as it descends. Even so is it with the coming of Divine grace. The greatest things we know of are unseen. God, the human soul, thought, truth, love, the atonement of Christ, and Divine influence are all unseen. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."

II. Divine influence, like the dew, is **SILENT**. We hear the pattering of the rain, the murmuring of the brook, the hum of the bee, the melody of the bird; but we hear not the light, we hear not the dew. The gates of the morning open, and the gates of the evening shut, but we hear them not. Even so the most delicate ear cannot hear the descent of the dew. And so, too, is it with the coming of Divine grace. The greatest powers are not only unseen in their essence, they are also silent in their operations.

Divine influence, like the dew, is GENTLE. The dew is so gentle that it falls upon the weakest flower without hurting or crushing it. So, too, gentleness is a property of Divine

"God hath abounded unto us in all wisdom and knowledge;" and it is well for us that prudence is one of the gifts of Deity. He continually carries all the suns, and all the systems of the past into the present, and into the future as easily as your shepherd carries in his arms the little lamb, as gently and sweetly as your mother carries her babe. The highest archangel cannot comprehend "the greatness of His power," and yet He deals prudently with all. In His great prudence He has given us "the man of sorrows," and He said to His disciples, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Every true believer may take up the language of David and address God thus, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." If the people of God have reason to exclaim, "He hath clothed us with *loving* kindness and *tender* mercies." The crown which God puts upon the head of His people, is not only soft. It is all-glorious without, all-glorious *within*. It is richly lined with the velvety bloom of peculiar love. It is a crown not only of "kindness and mercy," but of *loving* kindness and *tender* mercy."

Divine influence, like the dew, is REVIVING. It is the cause of many great blessings. The heat of yesterday's sun scorched the face of nature, but the dew falls through the night and by it the withered plant and drooping flower are revived and beautified. Even so Divine grace, upon the soul scorched and withered up by sin, imparts a freshness and a beauty to its life. It makes bad men good and good men better. It makes the profligate pure and the abandoned amiable. It quickens the meek with salvation." The flowers and fruits of spring can no more be produced without Divine influence, than the flowers and fruits of autumn can be produced without the sun, the rain, and the dew. Divine influence is the fountain of spiritual life, growth, strength, expansion,

beauty, fragrance, and fruitfulness, in every individual family and Church. "I will be as the dew unto Israel : he shall grow as the lily," &c.

V. Divine influence, like the dew, is **ABUNDANT**. The dew bespangles all the fields, forests, and gardens of our beautiful world. The humblest flower has its own drop of dew. The dew-drops at early dawn are countless as sunbeams in the summer noon. The dew, therefore, is a fine emblem of the abundance of Divine grace. God is not only rich in wisdom, power, holiness, justice, and truth, but He is also rich in mercy and grace. In Christ there is grace to enlighten, grace to pardon, grace to purify, grace to strengthen, grace to comfort, grace to beautify, and grace to glorify every human spirit.

VI. Divine influence, like the dew, is **FREE**. The dew falls as freely upon the barren rock as upon fertile soil, as copiously upon the sterile desert as upon the fruitful garden, as sweetly upon the rough fern as upon the delicate rose, as lightly upon the common grass as upon the bosom of the lily. Even so Divine grace is universally free. The most precious temporal blessings we possess are free to all. Light, air, water, and dew, are all free. There is an abundance of goods in the world's market ; enough of fine food and rich raiment to supply the wants of all mankind. But they are not free ; they can be obtained only by those who pay a high price for them. But Divine grace, more precious than all the treasures of earth, may be obtained by all, "without money and without price." This jewel of God is free to all as the light, as the air, as the water, and as the dew. This precious jewel is ours simply for the asking. With David, therefore, our prayer should ever be, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy *free* spirit."

JOHN DUNLOP.

# Biblical Criticism.

## THE CODEX SINAITICUS:—*Various Readings.*

### ADDITIONS.

Mark xiii. 1.—*διδάσκαλε* is repeated:—*διδάσκαλε, διδάσκαλε.*

Mark xiii. 7.—*ἀράτε* before *μὴ θροεῖσθε.*

Mark xv. 46.—*μεγαν* after *λίθον.*

### OMISSIONS.

Mark xli. 4.—*λιθοβολήσαντες.*

Mark xli. 32.—*Θεός.* So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark xlii. 8.—*κατὰ τόπους, καὶ ἔσονται λιμοὶ καὶ ταραχαί.*

Mark xlii. 14.—*τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ Δανιήλ τοῦ προφήτου.*

Mark xiv. 19.—*καὶ ἄλλος, μὴ τι ἐγώ.*

Mark xiv. 22.—*φάγετε.* So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark xiv. 24.—*καινῆς.*

Mark xiv. 27.—*ἐν ἐμοί, ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ.*

Mark xiv. 30.—*ἡ δις.*

Mark xiv. 68.—*καὶ ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησε.*

Mark xiv. 70.—*καὶ ἡ λαλιά σου ὁμοιάζει.* So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark xiv. 72.—*ἐκ δευτέρου. δις* also is omitted.

The reader will observe that the omissions in verses 30, 68, and 72, bring the narrative of Peter's denial into closer agreement with that in the other Gospels.

Mark xv. 3.—This verse stands as in Stephens's text, omitting the clause, *αὐτὸς δὲ οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίνατο.*

Mark xv. 28.—This verse is altogether wanting.

Mark xv. 39.—*κράξας.*

In this Codex, St. Mark's Gospel ends at chap. xvi., ver. 8. The remainder, 9—20, stands in the Alexandrine Codex, the Codex Ephraemi, and the Codex Bezae. It is wanting in the Vatican. It is quoted by Irenæus; but it continued long to be omitted from manuscripts. Probably



it was of somewhat later date than the former part of the Gospel. The internal evidence—which we cannot here detail—seems to favor the notion, that, *if written by St Mark, it was intended rather as a document supplementary to the preceding, than to form with it a continuous narrative.*

#### SUBSTITUTIONS.

Mark xii. 4.—*καὶ ἡτιμησαν*, instead of *ἀπέστειλαν ἡτιμημένον*.

Mark xiii. 10.—*προς τον λαον δεῖ*, instead of *εις παντα τὰ ἔθνη δεῖ*. But this is altered to *πρῶτον δεῖ*, without the *λαον*.

Mark xiv. 24.—*ὑπερ πολλῶν*, for *περὶ πολλῶν*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark xiv. 40.—*καταβεβαρημενοι*, for *βεβαρημένοι*.

Mark xiv. 47.—*ωτάριον*, for *ωτίον*.

Mark xiv. 65.—*ελαβον*, for *ἔβαλλον*.

Mark xv. 8.—*αναβαι*, for *αναβοήσας*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

Mark xv. 40.—One of the correctors reads *Ιωσήτος* for *Ιωσή*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles. The same in ver. 47.

Mark xv. 45.—*πτῶμα*, for *σῶμα*. So also Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

## The Chair of Theology.

[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

In considering the Evidences of Revelation, the subject which comes next in order, we distinguish two cases:—

First, the person to whom the revelation was originally made.

Second, the person who now reads the record of the original revelation.

In the first case, it is necessary to suppose that the revelation generally included its own evidence. No evidence

external to revelation itself, seems sufficient for the purpose of producing the highest conviction of truth and authority.

Revelation is such a communication from God as involves a singular and certain conviction, not only that the person is spoken to, but that God is the Speaker, a direct and immediate manifestation of God as the Person by whom the communication is made.

In accordance with this, Bishop Pearson writes thus in his "Exposition of the Creed," Article I. :—

"Those, then, to whom God did immediately speak Himself, or by an angel representing God, and so being in His stead, and bearing His name, (of which I shall need here to make no distinction) those persons, I say, to whom God did so reveal Himself, did by virtue of the same *Revelation* perceive, know, and assure themselves that He which spake to them was God ; so that at the same time they clearly understood both what was delivered, and by whom."

The core, therefore, of this Divine Speech, lies in the influence on the mind of the prophet producing such knowledge. And this influence we call Inspiration. Whether the prophet is directed to go and write down the communication, or whether he is irresistibly impelled to utter it at once, that is, to *prophesy*, does not seem a question of essential importance.

A miracle is a mode of revelation which accompanies and confirms the other. The Scripture words for it are—*ἔργον*, *work*, the most general; *δύναμις*, *power*, which is the manifested cause ; *σημεῖον*, *sign*, which is the meaning and the use ; and *τέρας*, *wonder*, which expresses the frequent effect.

Every creaturely agent has a domain of nature assigned to him, over which he has power, according to his rank in the scale of existence. His action in this sphere manifests his personality and his character. The domain of God alone is co-extensive with the whole of nature. As furnishing the field of action for creatures, He is Himself hid. His works are seen, not Himself. He is behind the veil of nature ; but when He works among creatures openly on the field of nature, He reveals His personality. The veil is drawn aside and He

appears, which is true *revelation*. Thus a miracle is the synthesis of omnipotence and open personality.

It hence appears, that miracles are not correctly distinguished from human works, when they are called "violations of the laws of nature." If a miracle does violate a law of nature, so does every human action which overpowers gravitation or any other force which nature has in itself. A miracle is distinguished from human works in this, that it manifests higher power. An absolute miracle is a display of omnipotence.

There is an instinct within us which prompts us to connect omnipotence with omniscience and perfect veracity, with absolute moral excellence. This instinct, the education of the Israelites as a nation during many ages tended to confirm by experience. But omniscience and perfect veracity have the highest authority for our understanding; absolute moral excellence has the highest authority for our moral nature.

Besides this we must remember that the working of miracle, being action, manifests character, and that thus it is not only confirmatory of what is spoken, but has itself an independent revealing virtue.

We must remember besides, that God, appearing as a Personal Agent on the creaturely field, is not necessarily confined to miracle. He may perform innumerable actions which reveal Him, yet which do not manifest omnipotence or even superhuman power.

The second case is that of the person who now reads the record of the original revelation.

In this case we have to institute two inquiries:—

First, what means he has of ascertaining the trustworthiness of the record, that is, of satisfying himself, that the revelation, by speech and works, human and superhuman, was actually made.

Secondly, whether the record becomes in any true sense a revelation to himself.

Under the first head, the fact which naturally strikes us at once is, that the Bible does not come to him merely as a piece of literature or ancient history, but is commended to him by an existing community as the record of its origin and the charter of its privileges.

This community—the Church—has for many ages believed and taught that the documents are records of real revelation; has formally received them into the *Canon of Scripture*.

Of the origin of this community no other credible account can be given than that which is in the documents.

This community has certain peculiar usages—the sacraments—and of their origin no other credible account exists or can be given than that which is in the documents.

With the narrative of the origin of this community the records of the miracles and the reports of the Divine speech are so inextricably intertwined, that if this element of revelation is rejected, the existence of the community is an insoluble problem.

It is an obvious remark, that a recorded miracle, as such, cannot establish the historical trustworthiness of a document, since itself rests on that trustworthiness. Yet, taken in connection with the otherwise unaccountable origin of the Church, the recorded miracle does authenticate the history.

This community has now and has formerly had many members of exalted virtue, of virtue surpassing the noblest examples that can be found elsewhere. These good men have lived and died in the belief of revelation and in the closest communion with the Bible. Their goodness is accountable only on the supposition of the reality of revelation.

Of the genuineness and authenticity of the separate books, there is evidence of the same nature, but in far greater quantity, than exists in favor of other ancient works.

The united force of these reasons constitutes a very strong presumption in favor of the truth of the records.

The second inquiry is whether the record becomes in any sense a revelation to the reader.

Here let us bear in mind what was before settled, namely, that the central object of revelation is God Himself, and that this revelation is the evidence of itself.

The reader begins, as we have said, with a strong prepossession in favor of the truth of the record, which is the effect of the considerations above set forth.

This book seems to supply him with the missing key to the

mysteries of his being. He finds the recorded facts to be of such a character, in their overpowering majesty, in their responsiveness to the wants of human nature, and in their congruity with the accompanying Divine Speech, that his strong prepossession becomes earnest belief.

Again, when he reads the speech, said to have been addressed to the original prophet, or uttered by the Incarnate Word, its peculiar and indescribable character, its singular efficacy, produce the instinctive conviction that it is indeed Divine. The Word of God is *a fire, a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces*. Compared with other utterances, it is *as wheat to chaff*. It is *quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*.

As in the case of the original receiver of revelation, so here in the case of the reader of the record, the deeds and the speech confirm each other.

Thus the reader of the Bible is placed in a situation, as a receiver of revelation, not far inferior to that of the original witnessing writer.

It is not of essential importance whether he attains this position, before examining the external history of the documents, or afterwards. That external history tends to establish the truth, and the testimony of the Church leads men to read the Scriptures, which is the end. But that end is often attained by the simple, if not without guidance from the Church, at least without the aid of learning.

We have judged it unnecessary to make prominent the agreement of Scripture doctrine with the purest moral teaching to be had elsewhere, or the congruity of it with our previous conceptions of God's character. The God of the Bible far surpasses in majesty, and in power over the affections, the God of the philosopher. Many a poor soul learns for the first time from the Bible to feel that he has a conscience at all. In no sense is it correct to say that Revelation needs evidence from Natural Religion.

# The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

## *The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.*

"And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."  
—Mark vii. 37.

As our Lord had a reason for every thing which He did, although we cannot always perceive it, so doubtless there is a meaning in the variety of His treatment of the persons whom He healed. One is cured by a bare volition, another by a word, a third by a touch, a fourth by anointing with clay, and washing in the pool of Siloam. The deaf stammerer referred to in the text, was first drawn aside from the crowd, probably that he might be able to attend to Jesus, quietly and without distraction. Then, the Lord "put his fingers into his ears, and spit, and touched his tongue." Not that we are to suppose that such means were necessary for the greater ease of the cure; still less that they had any natural efficacy. By these actions the Lord Jesus wished to signify to the man that the source of curative power was in His own person. By looking up to heaven He testified His union with God, and taught the man from what quarter power and help did proceed, and to whom he was to give thanks. The healing of the man's body was a means well calculated to call forth right feelings of faith and gratitude, and by the actions with which it was accompanied, such feelings would naturally be intensified and enlarged.

So, brethren, God, in healing our spiritual diseases, and in training us for good, considers our various characters and capacities, and varies the treatment accordingly. The very same means which would be powerless, nay even injurious, to one person, may prove the salvation of another. This variety of treatment gives rise, of course, to a corresponding variety of inward experiences. No one mental history tallies

exactly with another. No one should distress himself because his history has not exactly conformed to another's. There is no such thing as a standard series of states of mind, through which all must pass. In general, it would be probably found that of two persons, both of whom God had "brought out of darkness into His marvellous light," very little corresponded in the experience, excepting the state out of which, and that into which, both had been conducted. One has vividly imprinted on his memory all the circumstances of a great spiritual crisis, a stormy turning-point of his destiny. Another has been led by imperceptible degrees to sensibility and obedience. Their autobiographies would have in common only this statement, "Whereas I was blind, now I see."

God's variety of dealing with human minds may be beautifully illustrated by the prophet's words (Isa. xxviii 27—29).—"For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

Wise parents will in this respect imitate the conduct of gracious Fatherly Providence, will study the different characters of their children, and not subject them all to one uniform system of training and discipline. The teacher who has not been impelled by variety of disposition and ability in his pupils to a corresponding variation of method, has yet to learn the rudiments of his art. The Christian minister, made wise by experience, well knows the necessity of adapting his exposition of the truth and his enforcement of duty to the general character and individual diversities of his audience. He has continually to remember, not only the general characteristics which diversify his congregation from others, but also the particular respects wherein his hearers are diversified among themselves. They have not all received

the same intellectual training, they occupy different positions, they sustain various relations to each other and to society. New circumstances are continually arising to modify their feelings and subject them to new trials. As a skilful physician studies the constitution of each of his patients, so will a wise physician of souls ; and not think it to be more rational to use the same course of treatment for every conscience than for every corporal condition.

We are informed by the Evangelist, that after the actions before described, the Lord Jesus, "looking up to heaven, *sighed.*" A most beautiful, affecting and characteristic incident, so circumstantially and graphically related, as to suggest that the account must have originally been given by one who was present, was attentively watching the scene, and received from it a vivid and lasting impression.

The sigh was probably wrung from Christ's priestly heart, not only by compassion for the individual before Him, but by looking at this individual as a representative of the innumerable and manifold sufferers belonging to the general humanity with which Christ had allied Himself, and with which He sympathized. Then would press on Him the mournful thought of the sin which was the cause of all this sorrow ; the sin and the sorrow both being the wretched work of the devil's malice, whose works He had undertaken to destroy. Would that all the sin could be removed as He was now healing this man's infirmities ! Would that the ears of all could be opened to God's word, and their tongues loosed for His praise !

"And looking up to heaven, he sighed." Our Lord saw far more deeply than we into the abyss of evil. That spectacle saddened His earthly life, and made Him "a man of sorrows." He could endure it better than we. It is, perhaps, well for us that our views of evil are so superficial, and our knowledge so bounded ; for if we could search far we should always find enough of wickedness and wretchedness to render further composure impossible in our merely human minds, enough to madden us with horror and despair.



But mercy has drawn a veil over our eyes, that we may not see all. Christ, however, did see all.

Let us not, however, prove insensible to what we may see, to what we do see, of our own sins and wretchedness, or of those of our brethren. Let the sighs of Jesus quicken us to penitence. Let us, in our measure, imitate His priestly compassion. Let us be aroused to do what we can to ameliorate the evils of humanity.

The sighs of Jesus are *precious and powerful with God*. If He accepts the sacrifice of a troubled spirit, and "despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desires of such as be sorrowful," though the sacrifice and desires of sinners, much more will He regard the sacred sighs of Him, of whom he said, "Thou art my beloved Son. In thee I am well-pleased." The prayers of Jesus were always heard; the sighs of Jesus were omnipotent—from the time when first He felt the load of human evil, to that overwhelming hour when He bowed His head and died. The sighs of Jesus had an intercessory meaning and virtue, and brought down heavenly mercy on the earth, and on His brethren. Still in His glory, these sighs are remembered; the memorial of His death is there. With such an Advocate, let us approach with courage our Father's footstool.

The sighs of Jesus *reveal God's disposition towards us*. So complete is His agreement and union with the Father, that He is a visible manifestation of the Invisible God. Every word, every action, every sigh, reveals the Godhead. We learn much of God in nature, we may infer much for our encouragement from His past gentle care and watchfulness over us—but in Christ we come into immediate contact with Him. "He that hath seen me," said He, to Philip, "hath seen the Father." Here, then, in this sigh which broke forth from the God-man, we have an indication of God's mind towards us—of His willingness to save. The old words thus receive the most direct and forcible illustration:—"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways and live?"

sorrow of Jesus is neither mere sentiment, nor is it pitiless sympathy of one who would—but cannot—help.

At once in the mighty creative word, *Ephphatha, be opened.* straightway his ears were opened, and the string of anguish was loosed, and he spake plain.” Christ’s gifts are conferred with ease. The efficacious word is spoken, fully, but in a sigh. So is it with all that He bestows on us. It is first purchased with the price of His own blood.

“There’s ne’er a gift His hand bestows  
But cost His heart a groan.”

I think you will find that in this world of sorrow and of great benefactors do not work deliverances mirth—but in sadness. It is thus that great things are done. When success is achieved the joy follows. “He that sows on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed, doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.”

It is a consoling thought, brethren, that our sufferings are according to God’s wish, that they are inflicted for the sake of discipline, and that He would have pleasure in releasing them. It is a solemn thought, that our sin is still contrary to His will, that, as long as we refuse to give up, we are fighting against Him, we are cherishing that which wrung groans from Christ, which prostrated Him on the Mount of Gethsemane, and then lifted Him up on the cross.

Let us come to Him for deliverance from them, pray Him to remove the dulness of our perception, and our inability to His mercy. Ever and anon we relapse into darkness and bondage, the avenues to our souls are obstructed, the free action of our noblest powers is impeded by sin. We need the *Ephphatha* to be spoken over us, not only often. We need it now. Utter it, merciful Lord? We understand Thy word, and when Thou hast opened our mouth shall show forth Thy praise, and we will encourage one another, “He hath done all things well. He has made both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.”

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE OF THE GOOD.

"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."—Ps. cxii. 6.

THIS may be predicated of the wicked as well as the good. The words they have spoken to deceive, seduce, defame, and the deeds they have wrought to corrupt and injure, will live for ever in the memory of those with whom they have had to do. The souls of those they have injured, will hold them up for ever in memory as objects of loathing and anathema. No man who has ever touched the soul of another will ever be forgotten. The impressions he has made are ineffaceable, his visage is photographed in immortality. But the righteous are remembered for ever; for different reasons and with different emotions. Such considerations as the following might be adduced to show the imperishable memory of the righteous.

I. IT IS SEEN IN THE FAVORS WHICH HEAVEN CONFERS UPON REMOTE POSTERITY FOR THEIR SAKE. God blesses children's children, unborn generations, for the sake of a holy ancestor. David may be selected as an example of

this. Often we find in the history of the Jewish nation, that after they had by their sins incurred the displeasure of Heaven, justice was delayed or arrested in her avenging mission for the sake of David. Thus the Almighty speaks to Solomon, whose flagrant apostasy called for justice:—"I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for *David thy father's sake*: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen." (1 Kings xi. 11—13.) Years rolled away, and Abijam is king over Judah. His sins call for vengeance. But why was the stroke delayed! Here it is:—"For David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him." (1 Kings xv. 4.) Time passes on. Abijam is gone, and Jehoram is on the throne. His iniquities challenge the justice of the Divine government. Why at that time was not the nation crushed on account of the crimes in

which the monarch and the people revelled? Here it is:—"The Lord would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake." (2 Kings viii. 19.) Still, time passes on. Hezekiah is on the throne, Jerusalem is besieged, the danger is appalling and seems inevitable. Why was it not destroyed? Here is the exposition:—"I will defend the city to save it, for mine own sake and for my servant David's sake." Here, then, is a man, who in his day, notwithstanding some grievous criminalities, had in the main his heart right with God, made the ground of blessings to his countrymen ages after he had gone to sleep with his fathers. May not this be a striking example of an ever-operative principle in the Divine government? May it not be that God always blesses some on account of the excellences of others? For the sake of one good man, God might bless some men through all coming ages. Thus, the Eternal has the "righteous in everlasting remembrance." They exist in His mind as reasons for the display of His mercy. The truth of the text is seen—

II. IN THE GOOD WHICH THE ALMIGHTY ACCOMPLISHES BY THEIR INSTRUMENTALITY THROUGH DISTANT TIMES. God

employs good men here to do good, ages after they have gone. First: *The biography of good men He uses for the good of posterity.* The holy lives recorded in the Sacred Book are perpetual organs for usefulness. For many a century they have been doing the work of Heaven, and they will continue to do so until the end of time. Joseph, Moses, David, Peter, Paul—these are all in everlasting remembrance. And the memoirs of righteous men which abound in the religious literature of the world, continue to exert their high influence, and keep their heroes up from age to age in the minds of men. Though dead they yet speak. Secondly: *The literary productions of good men He uses for the good of posterity.* A book is a second incarnation of the man's self, a body in which he works after his flesh and blood has gone to corruption. Baxter, Bunyan, Watts, Wesley, are the representatives of untold numbers of righteous men who will continue, by their writings, to live in the memory of posterity; though dead they yet speak. The truth of the text is seen—

III. IN THE CONNECTION OF THEIR LABORS WITH THE INDESTRUCTIBLE CONSCIOUSNESS OF MEN. Their labors,

whether successful or unsuccessful, will never be forgotten by those upon whom they have been employed. The saved and the lost will remember their counsels, their reproofs, their exhortations, their sermons, their prayers, for ever and ever. They burn like quenchless stars in the firmament of every soul they have endeavored to bless. From the deepest experience of all upon whom they have acted, their works will rise to memory as regularly and resistlessly as billows from the abyss of ocean. The truth of the text is seen—

IV. IN THE BLESSINGS WHICH THE ALMIGHTY WILL IMPART TO THEM THROUGH ALL ETERNITY. They will always be the objects of Divine thought and care, and out of the fulness of His love, will He continue to supply their wants—

"While life and thought and being last,  
And immortality endure."

The subject teaches (1) The immenso value of a righteous man in society. His usefulness is as permanent as the stars. (2) The best method of achieving lasting fame. Men desire lasting fame. With some the desire is a passion. Usefulness alone can give it. He who saves one soul builds up a monument for himself that

shall stand for ever. (3) The infinite regard which God has for goodness. He endows it with immortal honor.

#### CONVERTING A SOUL.

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 19, 20.

From this verse observe two things.

#### I. A SOUL LOST BY ERROR.

"If any of you do err from the truth." Two things are implied in this expression:—First: *A safe antecedent state.* That state is a non-erring from the truth, a harmony with the truth. What is it to be in conformity with the truth? (1) Our conceptions in harmony with its essentials. (2) Our life in harmony with its spirit. This is to be in the truth, and to be thus in the truth is to be safe. The other thing implied here is:—Secondly: *A fearful possibility.* It is implied that a soul can fall from that state, can err from that truth; can bound away from that orbit. (1) This, man *can* do because he is moral. Had he not the power to do so, he could feel

responsibility for his con-  
 (2) Man *has* done so.  
 n, David, Peter, &c. So  
 ed have angels that excel  
 rength. Many forces are  
 ork here to drive men  
 7 from the truth,—reck-  
 speculation, Church in-  
 istency, Satanic agency,  
 dly fascinations, &c.  
 ther thing to observe  
 is—

A SOUL SAVED BY MAN.  
 t him know, that he  
 h converteth the sinner  
 the error of his way  
 l save a soul from death,  
 shall hide a multitude of  
 " Three things are in-  
 ed in this language.  
 t: *That it is possible for*  
*to convert a soul.* This  
 ost manifestly implied;  
 n we say it is possible  
 mean—(1) It is possible  
 a converted man to do so.  
 oul in error cannot lead  
 truth. Spiritual ignor-  
 cannot enlighten. Car-  
 ty and worldliness cannot  
 vert to Christ. The man  
 self must be a converted  
 to convert. No other  
 the qualification, no other

Heaven bless. (2) A  
 erted man can only do so  
 he *gracious agency of God*.  
 power and sufficiency for  
 purpose are of God. This  
 feels in his work, and all  
 ess he ascribes lovingly  
 gratefully to his Maker.

Secondly: *That the man who*  
*converts a soul accomplishes*  
*immense good.* (1) He saves  
 "a soul from death." What is  
 the death of a soul? Not  
 extinction of being, not cessa-  
 tion of consciousness, not the  
 abrogation of responsibilities,  
 but the loss of all that makes  
 existence worth having. (2)  
 "He hides a multitude of sins"

—shall cover them over so  
 that they shall not be seen.  
 (1) The act causes the blot-  
 ting out the iniquities of the  
 converted. They are swept  
 away clear from the sky of  
 his soul. (2) The act prevents  
 an unknown number of sins  
 being committed. Had the  
 soul remained in a state of  
 error from the truth, what  
 sins it would have committed.  
 (3) The act brings out an  
 agency for the destruction of  
 sin. The converted soul sets  
 to work to convert others.

Thirdly: *That the immense*  
*good he accomplishes should*  
*be well considered by him.*  
 "Let him know it." "Let  
 him know it," to cheer him  
 amidst the discouragements  
 of his labors, and to inspire  
 him with persevering zeal.  
 "Let him know it," in order  
 that he may adore his all-  
 merciful Creator, in employ-  
 ing him in a mission so  
 transcendently glorious and  
 beneficent.

## ANGELIC SINNERS.

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgement."—2 Peter ii. 4.

HUMAN sinners surround us. We are with them—we are of them. Our acquaintance with them is a terrible reality. Of angelic sinners we know nothing but what is revealed in the Holy Word, and in that Word we have a great deal concerning them; and the information is undoubtedly designed for our study, and our profit. We may mention a few of the things which we learn from the Divine Record concerning them. We learn—

I. That they are the most ANCIENT sinners. They were the first transgressors of Heaven's eternal law. They sinned before man was created, and when his home perhaps lay in chaos. They were the first to break the moral harmony of the universe. Being the first sinners, two things strike our attention concerning them. First: *The uniqueness of their circumstances.* They had no tempter. Adam had; so has his race ever since; so have we. But all the circumstances that surrounded them flowed in a mighty tide in favor of

virtue. They had no depraved propensities. All the descendants of Adam have, which account for their sinful conduct. All their propensities were in favor of holiness. The other thing that strikes our attention concerning them is—Secondly: *The force of their freedom.* Having neither an outward tempter nor an inward propensity to wrong, they must have risen up against all the external circumstances, and internal tendencies of their being. We learn—

II. That they are the most INFLUENTIAL sinners. First: *They were the original introducers of sin to this world.* They have a mighty leader, spoken of as the "Devil," "Satan," "Prince of this world," "the God of this world," "the Prince of the power of the air." He it was that appeared to our first parents in pristine innocency, and turned them from the true, the righteous and Divine. Secondly: *They are the constant promoters of sin in this world.* The principalities and powers of darkness under the direction of their tremendous leader, have been for six thousand years unremittingly engaged in promoting wickedness amongst men. They have a kingdom here, and the vast populations

the world have been, since they fall, and still are, their real subjects. They are terribly powerful. One of them has power to lead the world captive at his will. They can tempt men, men cannot tempt them. We learn—

III. That they are the most INCORRIGIBLE sinners. Instances of man's conversion from sin are numerous, and are multiplying. The greatest of human sinners have been changed—Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Saul of Tarsus, &c.; but we have no record of the conversion of a fallen angel; their character seems stereotyped. From age to age, century to century, plenium to millenium, they continue rebels against God, opponents to holiness, and enemies to the creation. Their incorrigibility shows in three things. First: *That intellectual knowledge cannot convert.* They have intellects of vast capacity, they commenced their education under the immediate radiance of the Divine throne. They have studied God and His universe, both as innocent and as sinful beings. Their knowledge must be immense, yet they are unconverted. Intellectual knowledge, alas, is all in vain. Do not dream of our science and philosophy

ever converting men. Their incorrigibility shows:—Secondly: *That an experience of the evil of sin cannot convert.* There are some who say that men will get their moral evils one day corrected, as physical evils are corrected, by the experience of the evils of their mistakes. Angels have had experience of the evils of sin. They know what the wrath of God is, what hell is. They have felt it through many a rolling age, yet they are unreformed, more obdurate now perhaps than ever. Misery, like law and terrors, does but harm. We learn—

IV. That they are the most MISERABLE of sinners. There are three things which indicate something of the extent of their misery—First: *Contrast between their present and past condition.* Our condition to-day, happy or otherwise, is greatly controlled by its felt relation to the past. The humble cot, furnished with the mere necessities and common comforts of life, would make the homeless pauper happy, but the born lord of a mansion miserable; and that on account of the felt contrast between the past and the present. The original condition of angels was transcendently glorious and blessed—they were the morning stars of creation, the elder-born of



God. But what now? They are reserved "in chains of darkness"—they are in 'everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Another thing which indicates something of the extent of their misery is—Secondly: *The vastness of their capacity.* The misery of a spiritual being greatly depends upon his capability of thought. Men, in similar conditions, do not suffer equally. He who is able to take the widest view of the causes, relations, and bearings of his position, will feel the most. Angels have a capacity far greater than men to understand the origin, bearings, and issues of their crimes. Another thing still, which indicates something of the extent of their misery is—Thirdly: *The utter hopelessness of their state.* There is hope for human sinners in this world; there is a Saviour provided for them; there is a heaven that is offered to them. There seems no hope for fallen angels. Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He took on Him the seed of Abraham.

Such are some of the thoughts which the Bible suggests to us concerning angelic sinners. And are not such thoughts suited, as undoubtedly they are designed, to rouse us human sinners to

spiritual earnestness in the cause of our salvation?

#### A FATHER'S THOUGHT OVER HIS CHILD'S GRAVE.

"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."—2 Sam. xii. 23

THE context shows David in two aspects. First: *Suffering as a sinner.* He had committed a great sin, and the loss of his child was a retribution. Secondly: *Reasoning as a saint.* "And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." The text implies David's belief in three things.

I. THE UNRETURNABLENESS OF THE DEAD. "He shall not return to me." He felt that all grief was useless, all prayer was unavailing. The dead return not again. "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." "I shall behold man no more in the land of the living," said Hezekiah. First: *There is no returning to discharge neglected duties.* Duties which we have neglected in relation to our children, our servants,

our neighbours, our country, we can never return after to discharge. They remain undone. "There is no work, knowledge, or device in the grave," &c. Secondly: *There is no returning to recover lost opportunities.* Lost Sabbaths, lost sermons, lost means of grace, no one comes back from the grave to redeem. If there is no return to the earth—(1) How foolish it is to set our hearts upon it. (2) How important to finish its work as we go on. The text implies David's belief—

II. IN THE CERTAINTY OF HIS OWN DISSOLUTION. "I shall go to him." He had no doubt on the subject, nor has anyone any reason to doubt. "It is appointed unto all men once to die." "One generation cometh, and another passeth away." "We must all die, and be as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." First: *The certainty of death is universally admitted with the understanding.* There is no room left for questioning it. Death reigned from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ, from Christ to this hour. Secondly: *The certainty of death is universally denied by the life.* All men live as if they were immortal. How morally infatuated is our race! The text implies David's belief—

III. IN THE RE-UNION AFTER DEATH. "I shall go to him." First: *The re-union he believed in was spiritual.* It evidently means more than going to his grave, and the mingling of their dust together. There would be no consolation in this. Secondly: *The re-union he believed in was conscious.* They would feel themselves together, recognize each other as child and father. The doctrine of a recognition of spirits in a future world, may be argued by the laws of mental association, the benevolence of God, and the allusions of Scripture. Thirdly: *The re-union he believed in was happy.* There would be no consolation in the idea of an unhappy union. (1) He believed that his child was happy. Infants go to heaven. "Of such," says Christ, "is the kingdom of heaven." The men who deny this, have dehumanized their nature by a barbarous theology. (2) He believed that he was safe. He felt that he should go to him, be with him in that happy world.

Let these thoughts of death aid us to fulfil the mission of life.

## CHRISTIAN DIGNITY.

"Thou shalt increase my greatness."—Ps. lxxi. 21.

THE world has its great men; so has the Bible. When we put them alongside each other the comparison often deepens into the contrast. Alongside the monarch, the Bible puts the man who rules his own spirit well; the warrior, one who fights the fight of faith; the artist, one who by loving deeds paints his own portrait on the canvas of the soul of the suffering. A good man is a great man, but a bad man is not great though he sits upon a throne.

I. This greatness is REAL. Consider what God calls the good man—a saint, a son, a joint heir with Christ. Who are his bosom friends? The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. What has he on his side? God, and truth, and Christ, a purifying faith, an approving conscience, glorious hopes, and angel sympathies. This honor hath all the saints. With many in this vain world, "the rank is but the guinea's stamp," but here, there is not only heaven's stamp, but heaven's gold!

II. This greatness is CONSCIOUS. God has spoken; I have heard. He has given; I have received. He visited the land I lived in, and did

not pass *my* door. In his mighty life-boat He touched at the shore where I stood, gave me a hail and welcomed me on board! These are the glad testimonies of the renewed one: "I know in whom I have believed," &c.

III. This greatness is DERIVED. Once I had it not. Peace did not fold her gentle wing and nestle in my bosom, the joy of the Lord was not my strength. I was alienated from the life of God. The remembrance of this shall ever keep me humble. "Not unto us," &c. But though I once possessed them *not*, now I do. "Being justified by faith I have peace." "I joy in God, by whom I have received the atonement."

IV. This greatness is INCREASING. David was an old man, yet he could say soberly and acceptably, "Thou shalt increase my greatness." First: *In my personal enjoyment.* Religion is not a surface thing, it is a thing of the heart—living, growing, expanding, blooming, fruit-bearing; not a stagnant pool, but a living stream. Infirmities shall lessen, virtues shall increase, thy love shall be more precious, thy presence more valued. "Thou wilt not forsake the work of thine own hands." Secondly: *In*

*the experience of the saints.* Perhaps it was given the Psalmist in a flush of holy inspiration to see, as he swept the plains of coming generations, that his experience would not be lost upon those who in the strife were fighting for the right and the true. Is not this even expressed in verse 18, "Until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come." David's name is great to-day! And in every well-worn Bible may be seen the signs of his sympathy and power. Thirdly: *In the admiration of angels.* What sympathizing, appreciating, ministering spectators are these! H. T. M.

*Liverpool.*

#### JEHOVAH OUR HOME.

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place."—Ps. xc. 1.

THIS psalm sets forth the eternity of God and the frailty of man. Mourning the ills that contract and the evils that embitter this short span of existence, it turns man's *thoughts* to that power which can establish, and his hopes to that "mercy" which can "satisfy," and crown with fadeless "beauty," (see v. 17.) *Observe the solemnity and force of the language of verses 1—3.* "Lord, thou hast been our

dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, return, ye children of men." Inspiration stretches language into the misty eternity on either side, and reveals God existing ere ever a world was formed, and unchanged by circling years; when the "mountains" depart and the hills remove. If the "mountains," the emblems of constancy, mock man's littleness as they stand, broad-based and solemn, from century to century; how painfully evident that littleness becomes when man has to do with Him, in whose sight a "thousand years are as a yesterday;" how dream-like the brief, dwarfed being; how priceless a refuge from the "flood" that "carries them away;" how blest is he whose spirit leans on this truth:—"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations!" The words suggest:—

I. MAN NEEDS A HOME.—A refuge beyond the reach of vicissitude. (1) We crave *immortality*, and our longings are never satisfied, our questions never answered, till our hopes

take hold of the Infinite. Like the climbing plant, without the strong stem to support it, the sensibilities of our frail but wonderful nature, trail in the dust. Without repose in God, there may be the butterfly's gaiety while summer sunbeams last, but the worm is shelterless when the blast of adversity beats.

(2) Some are anxious to establish man's *orphanage*; the child of no promise; the homeless heir of nothing. The unblest joylessness of such spirits indicates the "divinity that stirs within us." (3) Many say, "our Father" with the lip, but know nothing of the "many mansions," the children's home; how can they know anything of home who believe in a *heartless* God?

II. GOD REVEALS HIMSELF AS HUMANITY'S HOME. "Our dwelling place." Though sin's leprous spot taints the wall of our most sacred chamber, yet it has not razed the foundations of *home*. We know something of the joys of its kindly shelter, when the ice blasts of a cold world bear upon us. But we cannot build for ourselves a *perfect home*. In God this home is *provided*, elaborately finished for the tenant man: he is invited to occupy it in perpetuity—"all things are now ready." God is a *perfect home*

for the spirit; *perfect*, where nature, worn and weary with the world's incessant friction can relax itself; where every want can be met with God's unfailing supply. *Perfect*, for under the grand sunlight of prosperity's sky, nature and grace congratulate us when we exult in God. *Perfect*, for the darkest midnight that trouble can frown is arched by some bow of promise.

"Sorrow touched by thee grows bright  
With more than rapture's ray;  
As darkness shows us worlds of light  
We never saw by day."

The perfection of our home in God is seen in three particulars. First: *Physical adaptation*. This world is fitted up for man's accommodation; fitted to engage energy and repay toil. It is not for the idler's comfort: he is the devil's apprentice and clumsily endeavors to kill time. "Dress it and keep it" are the terms of the original grant. So used, there is bread and work for all. Men talk of the "curse of labor;" we don't believe in it; labor is one of our blessings; designed to keep us warm with healthful exercise under our chill moral skies. It is not the "thorns and briars," but,

"Man's inhumanity to man,  
Makes countless thousands mourn."

Secondly: *Intellect finds a home in God*. Never talk of religious dulness, while the

fields of a universe, teeming with "grand thoughts grandly expressed," are not only largely *unexplored*, but in their boundless infinitude almost unknown. Our intellectual nature, with its ever-widening range of vision, may expatiate for ever in these fields of thought. All are the "precious thoughts" of God. Christianity represses no reverent curiosity. Its license is wide as the range of virtue, and interminable as existence. "Prove all things." "Whatsoever things are true," &c. "Think on these things." Our Father spreads out for the education of His children the grandly-illustrated page of nature, and the letter of His love. Christianity is the nurse of free thought. Thirdly: *Heart and soul—our moral being—find a home in God.* "In all generations." Religion, under every different form, and with every varied accompaniment: Patriarchal simplicity, Mosaic picture, Christian manhood—have ever been the same, ever fitted to man's heart. With tones of tenderness, it has ever substantially said, "I will give you rest." Believers of every past age, guided by the stars of promise, have passed within the veil, leaving their testimony; and each succeeding generation has been able gratefully to cele-

brate it—"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place," &c. *Every believer is going home.*

III. OUR HOME IN GOD IS INVIOABLE—IT IS PERFECTLY SECURE. This cannot be predicated of any earthly home. "He buildstoolow, that builds beneath the skies." Fortune's wheel is sure to revolve and bring widowhood to many. Uncertainty is the wormwood that embitters the joys of earth. But God knows every contingency, calculates the result of every event. His wisdom, power, love, &c., guarantee the inviolability of our home. Out of God, there is no resting-place for the jaded spirits of men; no arbor on the difficult hills of life; no home proof against the spoiler; or so barred that the ruthless hand of death will not tear the tenant from its shelter. But there is a "land of Beulah," "a house not made with hands," &c.

IV. GOD OUR HOME: THEN IT IS ETERNAL. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." An eternal home! Here culminate our loftiest aspirations, our highest hopes. Give man the good his nature is *fitted* to enjoy; *secure* its possession to him *for ever*, and he finds that a perpetuity of bliss is bliss indeed. He has attained

"glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life." Man has no lease of aught he values here below; the grant by which he enjoys is *not renewable for ever*. Every moment relaxes his grasp of earth's joys. Everything here below that makes life desirable, fades; no spring revives the wasted forms of sere and faded pleasures. But rise up and look through the glass of this text, and "pleasures for evermore" are discoverable; for "thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations," and "to everlasting, thou art God."

V. THIS HOME IS TO BE REACHED THROUGH CHRIST. "I am the door." Even on earth, a man can enter the avenue to his Father's house, the strait gate leading to immortal honors. In *Him*, "the whole building is fitly

framed," &c. Built on Him, the rains may descend, the floods come, the wind blow, and yet the house falls not. In calm confidence of eternal security the believer says, "Return, O God, our shield." *Christ is the door*. Miss it, and the spirit is a homeless exile; a shelterless outcast on the plains of undone despair. The door of hope is for ever barred. Dream not of the joys of *home* out of Christ; and say not in your heart, "I cannot reach this distant home;" it is the seducer's whisper; stop your ears and cry "eternal life," *home, home, sweet home!* Every man may say, and ought to say, "I will arise and go to my Father." A home and welcome awaits every returning prodigal.

*Christian!* as the world reads your *creed* in your *tones* and life, let it see that you are *going home*. W. C. B.

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## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

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### HEATHEN THOUGHTS ON PRAYER.

O souls bowed earthward, and void of heavenly thoughts! what avails it to bring to the temples these worldly principles of ours, and to estimate what the gods think good after our own depraved nature? . . . Why do we not offer to the powers above, what the high-born cannot give from his great dish—duty to God and man harmonized in the soul, heart of

hearts all holy, and a breast imbued with generous honor. If only I bring these to the sanctuary, I shall please Heaven with my mite of salted meal.—*PERSIUS Sat. ii., 61, f.*

Is there nothing, then, for men to pray for? If you wish my advice, you will let the gods give of themselves, what is expedient for us and is suited to our fortunes. For the gods will send what is best for us, rather than what is pleasant.

Man is dearer to them than to himself. We, from impulse of passion and blind overpowering desire, pray for this and that; but the gods know what our prayers would turn out for us. If we must pray, if we must offer sacrifices, pray for a sound mind in a sound body; ask for a brave heart, free from fear of death, to reckon the end of life among the functions of nature; a heart able to endure any labors whatever; a heart that knows not passion or desire, and holds the toils of Hercules and cruel labors preferable to adultery, gluttony, and effeminacy."—JUVENAL, *Sat. x.*, 346—363.

And he (Socrates) prayed also to the gods simply to give him what was good. on the ground that the gods know best what kind of things are good. And he always thought that those who prayed for gold, or silver, or power, or anything of this sort, might as well pray for dice-play, or a battle, or anything else

of which the result is uncertain. And making small offerings from small means, he thought he stood on a level with those who made many and great offerings from great means. For, he said, that, as one thing, it was not well for the gods, if they took more pleasure in great than in small offerings, for in that case the offerings of bad men would often give them more pleasure than the offerings of the good; and again, it would not be worth while for men to live, if the offerings of the bad were more pleasing to the gods than those of the good. But he ever thought that the gods took most delight in honors paid them by the pious. And he approved this line—

"As you have ability, do offerings to the immortals."

Just as in conduct to our friends and guests, and in all one's life, "Do your best," was good advice.—XENOPHON, *Memorab.*, Bk. i., ch. 3, J. 3.

## Theological Notes and Queries.

### OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

#### SATAN AND SIN.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 1, p. 52. Satan and sin are not inseparable, in the sense that wherever there is sin, Satan must have caused it. Much sin is caused by the promptings of our own corruption, irregular instincts, and the like; and by the temptations of the world.

#### ANCIENT PREACHING.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 2, p. 52. Noah was "a

preacher of righteousness." (2 Peter ii. 5.) Ezra, standing on a pulpit or platform, expounded the law. (Neh. viii. 4—8.) Under the old economy, generally, the priests were expounders of the law, and the instructors of the people. (Mal. ii. 7.) The prophets were qualified and commissioned by God to speak in His name. Their prophesying corresponded to our preaching, with the exception that they were inspired, whereas our preachers often propagate error.



The prophet's business was not mere prediction of the future. He was God's mouth to the people; reproving sin, recalling them to allegiance, often declaring the most spiritual truths, and predicting the future Messiah and the glories of the Church.

WINNING REFINED SCEPTICISM.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 3, p. 52. They cannot be won

by Calvinian preaching, but are rather confirmed in opposition to Christianity. Perhaps one good method might be to nail to our pulpit doors wherever truth is not preached, until some one could be got to preach it. The truth of Christ, the standard doctrine of all ages of the Church, is "the power of God unto salvation" for all classes, for the Greek as well as the barbarian.

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

**CHAMBERS'S ENCYCLOPÆDIA.** A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People. Illustrated with Maps and numerous Wood Engravings. Vol. VI. London: W. & R. Chambers.

WE are glad to receive the sixth volume of this magnificent work. Alphabetically it carries us on from L A B to N U M. If the alphabet decides the length of the undertaking, it is half-way to the terminus. Its path hitherto has been through scenes rich in every department of science, literature, and art. Every step has given a revelation of something worth knowing. The amount of information compressed into the articles is truly amazing. There are volumes in a page, yet there is no confusion; there is clearness with condensation. The judgment we have passed upon the preceding volumes apply to this, and our recommendation is as hearty as ever. The work, when completed, will be a library in itself; such a library as comes within the reach of almost the poorest man that craves for knowledge.

**THE ILLUSTRATED POCKET CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY COMMENTARY ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.** Part I. to XII. By the **REVEREND ROBERT JAIMESON, D.D.,** St. Paul's, Glasgow; **A. R. FAUSSET, A.M.,** St. Cuthbert's, York; and **REV. PROFESSOR DAVID BROWN, D.D.,** Aberdeen. London: William Wesley.

THESE numbers complete this work. A work, "the object of which," we are informed, "has been to produce a Commentary embodying the

ripest results of modern criticism, and conveying the sense in a popular style, so full as to be of practical value to the Bible student, and compressed within such limits so as to bring it within the reach of all. The New Testament portion of the work is prepared with continual reference to the 'Critical Greek Testaments' of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles; and to the 'Critical Commentaries' of Bengel, de Wette, Meyer, Olshausen, Stier, Luthardt, Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Philippi, &c. Similar sources, including the most recent British and foreign commentators, are consulted on the Old Testament." For Sabbath School teachers, city missionaries, itinerant preachers, this work will be found of special service. Though scholarly, it is popular. It gives us the results, rather than the processes of learning, and its pages are not overlaid with Greek and Hebrew type. The work has our hearty approval, and we trust that its circulation will be equal to its merits.

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SERMONS ON BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUBJECTS. By the REV. THOMAS ALLEN, Author of "Discourses on Atheism. London: Jackson, Walford & Hodder.

THE Author of these sermons has long been a distinguished ornament of that influential and growing body of Christians known as "New Connection" Methodists. Though a man of his type ought to be known by Christendom, we fear that his name has not travelled far beyond the precincts of his own denomination. He is a thinker of no ordinary mould, dealing with the roots of things. To such, fame seldom comes at once, but it does come at last, and when it comes it spreads with the advancing intelligence of mankind, and flourishes for centuries over the graves of reputations won by superficial men. This volume contains thirteen discourses on important religious subjects, and they are fraught as might be expected from such an author with thoughts of unusual value and force.

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PASTORAL COUNSELS. By REV. J. C. BOYCE, M.A. London: William Macintosh.

"THE following pages," says the author, "owe their existence under the Great Disposer of all things, in the first instance, to a want felt by the author, in the course of his own ministrations to the sick and suffering, of a hand-book, that in cases of lingering illness, might enable him to impart some little variety to them on each successive visit. He felt anxious to turn to the best possible advantage, a season that, with very many, is the great turning-point of their lives—a season when the infinite realities of the eternal world are impressed with greater force and persistence upon the heart and the conscience; because in those 'still hours' prospects commonly open out before the sufferer, that stretch away into immensity, beyond this little islet of human life." This volume contains

forty-nine short addresses, adapted almost to every conceivable case of persons, and to each there is appended a short prayer. The design of the work is excellent, and its execution is admirable; it meets a necessity, and will be hailed, no doubt, by thousands of the benevolent and devout, who visit the sick and the dying. It will give a word in season to such.

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THOUGHTS ON PREACHING; being Contributions of Homiletics. By JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.

WE are informed that "it had long been the cherished wish of Dr. Alexander, to prepare a volume on Homiletics for the use of young ministers and students, and with this object in view, he was in the habit of jotting down in his private journals, in the form of paragraphs, such thoughts as occurred to him on the subject. In one of his later journals the following entry is found: 'If the Lord spare me below, it will be well for me some day to look over all my dailies, and collect what I have written from time to time on ministerial work. It is already enough for a volume. It might do good when I am gone.'" He is gone, and death has defeated his plans. One has arisen however, who has done what he intended, and we have in this volume the experiences and suggestions of one of the most distinguished scholars, and eminent ministers of the age, touching Homiletic work. Most preachers may derive great profit from the contents of this volume.

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SUNSHINE AND SHADOWS; or, SKETCHES OF THOUGHT, PHILOSOPHIC AND RELIGIOUS. By WILLIAM BENTON CLULOW. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Co.

THIS is a remarkable book, and much to our liking. It contains thoughts on a vast variety of subjects—and those thoughts which could only flow from the highest class of cultured intellect. Every page is a mine—not of brass or iron—but of gold. We have heard that the author was once a professor in some Nonconformist College. Why he is not so now, we know not, unless it be that the committee of that college preferred educated inanity to cultured power. The chairs in some of our theological colleges are built for creedal pedants, rather than for Christian philosophers. We hope to enrich our pages occasionally with extracts from this remarkable book.

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WHOLESOME WORDS. Selected and revised by J. E. RYLAND, M.A. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

WHEN we say that this volume contains the choicest words from Taylor, Adams, Sibbes, and Leighton, our readers will accept the title as a truthful one. The editor would do well to go on, and make selections, equally judicious, from the productions of other great authors of past centuries.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Christ's Detachment from Sinners.

"Separate from sinners."—Heb. vii. 26.



HE expression "separate from sinners," seems intended as an explanation of the three phrases preceding it—"holy, harmless, undefiled;" these phrases being selected by the apostle to express his conception of the perfect purity of Christ's character. I shall look at Christ's moral detachment from sinners *as a deep feeling in the mind of His contemporaries; as an undoubted fact realized by Himself; and as an essential power in His redemptive undertaking.*

I shall look at His detachment from sinners—

I. AS A DEEP FEELING in the mind of His contemporaries. He enters a synagogue at Nazareth, His native place. All there knew His humble pedigree, and regarded Him as one of their peasant townsmen; but there was such a moral originality of goodness about Him, that after He had closed the book He read from, "the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." (Luke iv. 14—27.) A Roman centurion—"a man under authority"—felt the same awe in the presence of Jesus; felt that between him and the Peasant there was a distance that made him humble, and he said, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof." (Matt. viii. 5—13.) Those who sold and bought in the temple felt this; and, struck with terror, they hurried off. (Matt. xxi. 12.) The scribes and Pharisees

who accused the woman taken in adultery, could not stand before the unearthly purity of Christ's character, and they "went out one by one." (John viii. 1—11.) The Roman ruffians who came in the garden of Gethsemane to take Him by force felt it, and they fell as dead men before Him. Pilate felt it, struggled against it, but it overwhelmed him at last. The spectators of the crucifixion felt it. Luke tells us that "all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned."

If the people, generally, including His enemies, were thus impressed with the mysterious moral distance which separated Him from them all, it is natural to suppose that His disciples, whose sensibilities had been quickened, would feel it too. Hence we hear Peter exclaim, "Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." In truth, wherever He appeared, there seemed to be a feeling that although He was with them, amongst them, He was not of them—that morally He lived in a world of His own, moved in an orbit linked to an unearthly centre, and lighted by unearthly rays. Now this feeling of distance which they had in relation to Him, cannot be accounted for on either of the three following grounds.

First: It cannot be accounted for on the ground of *miraculous manifestations*. He wrought miracles, it is true, numerous and stupendous ; but the people do not seem to have been terrified by these. These, as a rule, appeared attractive—drew men to Him. They followed Him for their sake. Moses and Elijah, too, wrought miracles ; yet their contemporaries had not a similar feeling of separateness.

Secondly: It cannot be accounted for on the ground of *His social superiority*. The feeling of the people towards Christ was nothing like that which the humbler classes experience in relation to those who occupy elevated positions in society. It was not that kind of distance at all. Such distance as that did not exist between Christ and His contemporaries. He was low in social rank. He was in a social sense one with the people.

Thirdly: It cannot be accounted for on the ground of *His non-sociality*. He did not shut Himself up in His own individuality, and stand aloof from His species with cold indifference. He was genial; His social proclivities were strong and active; He mingled with the people; He joined them in their worship and in their work; He accompanied them on their journeys; He sailed with them in their boats; He sat down with them at the festivities of the table.

No! His detachment from them, which they felt, was of another kind altogether. It was purely moral. His incorruptible truthfulness, His exquisite sensibilities, His calm reverence, His overflowing benevolence, His unconquerable love of eternal right, invested Him with that God-like air and bearing which made them feel that He stood at an unapproachable moral distance. Between Him and them, in a moral sense, there was nothing in common. Their reasoning could not touch His judgment. The heroes they worshipped, the conventionalities they respected, the pleasures they revelled in, were all contemptible to Him. The Prince of the World—one who embodied the leading thoughts, passions, and purposes of a corrupt world—came to Jesus, and could find nothing in Him; nothing in common; and, therefore, no fulcrum for his infernal lever.

I shall look at this detachment from sinners—

II. AS AN UNDOUBTED FACT realized by Himself. The feeling which the people had of His distance from them, was not a fanatical impression; it was founded upon fact—a fact that *Christ* Himself deeply realized. Christ felt Himself alone—alone in the teeming cities and the thronged assemblies. A mysterious solitariness rested upon Him wherever He went. He understood all, read them through and through; but none understood Him. Thoughts, and loves, and plans were in Him as His very life and spring of action, with which He found none to sympathize. “He came to his own, his own received him not.”

Christ's realization of this fact is seen—

First: *In His frequent personal withdrawal from men in order to hold fellowship with His Father.* His mind was heavy, and by the law of His human nature He craved for some sympathetic spirit to whom to unburden Himself. There was none amongst men. He goes to the Infinite Father. Frequently we read of Him being alone with the Father. Perhaps the burden of His cry to the Everlasting One was this: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee."

His realization of this fact is seen—

Secondly: *In much of the language He addressed to men.* Thus, when on one occasion, as He was surrounded by a crowd, He was told that His mother and His brethren had come desiring to see Him, His reply was, "My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God and do it." Language this, which, if it means anything, means that He felt Himself standing at a moral distance from His nearest relations. Thus, too, we often hear Him speak as if the whole of His mind was in a region far remote from the spheres of human activity. "Ye are from beneath," He says, "I am from above." And again: "I and my Father are one." Yes, He felt His detachment from the race He loved, the men amongst whom He lived, the world He came to save.

I shall look at this detachment from sinners—

III. As an ESSENTIAL POWER in His redemptive undertaking. The Divine holiness of character which thus detached Him from the men amongst whom He lived, and sinners of all times and lands, was just that power which qualified Him to be a Redeemer of the race.

First: *It was just that power which rendered His services as a Redeemer acceptable to God.* We may lay it down as a moral axiom, that efforts put forth to serve man, unless they are acceptable to God, will be of no real and lasting service. The apostle tells us in the context that it was this holiness of character that gave a Divine value to His sacrificial service. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless,

undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." His sacrifice would not have been accepted as an atonement for our transgressions had He not been "separate from sinners."

Secondly: *It was just that power that rendered His services as a Redeemer efficacious to man.* The sublime holiness of His life is that power that is to convict, renovate, sanctify, and save men. Had there been any moral imperfection in Him, He would have had no power to quicken souls into the life of virtue and God. A man who is one with sinners can never save them; he must be detached, he must keep within an orbit of heavenly purity and truth. Terrible is the mistake which the modern Church and many of its ministers are making in their endeavours to effect the spiritual reformation of mankind. By approximating as closely as possible to the sinful world, by making concessions to popular prejudices, tastes, pursuits, and pleasures, churches are endeavoring to convert men. They will tolerate worldliness in their members, and the clap-trap of business and the slang of streets in their pulpit. All this, in order to come into a nearer proximity to the world for the purpose of converting it. This is an inversion of the true order. The power of the Church to convert is in a felt moral detachment from the world. Hence the command, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." He who in spirit and character is most remote from sinners, who walks with God, and impresses sinners around him with their feeling of distance from him, is the man who sends the most renovating and saving influences into his age.

Brothers, the subject gives us a *reason for thankfulness*. How profound and practical should be our gratitude to God



for such a life as Christ's. The grandest fact in the history of this planet is, that One has been here wearing our humanity, and in that humanity living out the perfections of God. He brought the ideas, the spirit, the inspirations of the upper heavens down to this earth; and though He has gone, they are still here—here in this Blessed Book, here in many a holy life—and their existence here is the only hope of the world. The moral world is different since He has been here. The heavens, I think, are a little brighter; the air is more salubrious; and life, I am sure, has more significance. The subject, too, furnishes a motive for *self-examination*. How are we living? Are we living out the life of Christ—living a life of sublime separateness from the world? If not, we are none of His; for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” If not, do not expect to convert men. All your grand plans to improve the world are but mere castles in the air; and all the forces you exert are mechanical, not vital. They merely rattle in machinery; they neither multiply nor bless the life of the world. Your prayers are but jargon, and your religious discourses but “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” Without holiness no man shall see the Lord—no man can serve the Lord.

“Try us, O Lord, and search the ground  
Of our too sinful heart;  
Whate'er of guile in us is found,  
Oh, bid it all depart.  
When to the right or left we stray,  
Ne'er may Thy warnings cease;  
Still guide us in th' eternal way,  
The way of perfect peace.”



# A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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ALL expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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## SECTION THIRTEENTH.—Acts v. 12—16.

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people ; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them : but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits : and they were healed every one.”—Acts v. 12—16.

SUBJECT :—*Phases of the Young Church.*

THE case of Ananias and Sapphira detailed in the first eleven verses we have elsewhere noticed.\* The grand subject which that narrative brings out with the force of a tremendous miracle, is the *enormity of religious pretensions*. The verses before us present the young Church in two aspects, as an organ of restorative power, and as an institution differently affecting different men.

I. AS AN ORGAN OF RESTORATIVE POWER. We are told in

\* See “Homilist,” Vol. IV., New Series, p. 205.

the twelfth verse that "by the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were wrought among the people." And in the sixteenth verse *the restorative character* of all their works is distinctly stated: "*And they were healed every one.*" It is true that the works here recorded by the apostles were miraculous and material, but they may be fairly regarded as specimens and symbols of those spiritual works which the true Church has ever been, and still is, constantly performing for the moral restoration of mankind.

Two remarks are suggested concerning this restoration—

First: *It was manifestly Divine.* The "many signs and wonders" which the apostles wrought among the people were beyond all controversy Divine, and were felt by those who were the subjects and spectators to be so. So little did the people regard them as the effects of the natural power of the apostles, that they seemed to consider that the very *shadow of Peter* would be enough to accomplish them. "They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and on couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing might overshadow some of them." Luke does not say that any were healed by Peter's shadow, he merely states what was in the mind of the people on the subject. There was no doubt anywhere as to the Divinity of the works. The moral power in the Church to restore souls is also incontrovertibly Divine. No man, however exalted his piety, extensive his attainments, brilliant his talents, mighty his logic, and overwhelming his eloquence, can restore the lost soul. The power for it is the power of God.

Another remark suggested concerning this restorative work is—

Secondly: *It was abundantly adequate.* Great were the crowds of the diseased and afflicted of both sexes, and of all ages, which were brought to "Solomon's porch, and into the streets," on this occasion. The multitudes who were brought out of the "cities round about unto Jerusalem" were in different circumstances and afflicted with different diseases. Some were even "vexed with unclean spirits," but the healing

power was equal to all, met each case of the hundreds and the thousands, "And they were healed every one." So it is with the morally healing power in the Church. It is equal to every case, it is a balm for every wound.

The other aspect which the verses present to the young Church is—

**II. AS AN INSTITUTION DIFFERENTLY AFFECTING DIFFERENT MEN.** The Church which met there "with one accord in Solomon's porch," was an institution effecting very different results in the population around.

First: *In some it produced a revulsion.* "And of the rest durst no man join himself to them." By the "rest" here I understand, not the rest of the disciples, but the rest of that class of rich men to whom Ananias had belonged. The rich men of the world were so alarmed at the judgment that had come down upon Ananias and Sapphira, members of their class, that they recoiled with terror, and dared not unite themselves to the fellowship of the disciples. A Church whose discipline is so severely pure, which will not tolerate untruthfulness, dishonesty, or selfishness in any form, is sure to keep aloof the multitudes of the carnal, the mercenary, and the false. Would that the discipline of the Church were now of that exalted character, which would draw a broad line of demarcation between her and the ungodly world.

Secondly: *In some it awakened admiration.* "But the people magnified them." The multitudes, the general body of the people, felt a high respect and admiration for a community where such purity was displayed, as that which appeared in the doom which befel Ananias and Sapphira. Incorruptible sincerity, and high spiritual purity, will always command the honor and respect of the unsophisticated multitudes. The common people heard Christ gladly, because He spoke the true thing in the true spirit. And the common people will always honor the Church for what is pure and noble in the life of her members.

Thirdly: *In some it effected a conversion.* "And believers

were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Many saw in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, and in the miracles the apostles wrought, the hand of God; they believed, turned to the Lord, and identified themselves with His disciples. Thus the young Church produced different effects amongst men; some it frightened off; from some it won respect, and amongst others it won converts. All this it has ever done, and still does in proportion to the amount of Divine purity and truth which it displays in its history.

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## Germs of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*Spiritual Providence.*

"And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan."—Exod. xvi. 32—35.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-first.*

**I**N the first volume of the "Homilist," page 18, we used these words to illustrate the *Physical Providence of God*. We now employ them to illustrate some points in connection with that wonderful spiritual provision which God in Christ Jesus has made for us as sinners. Whether the manna was intended to be what is called a type of redemptive grace or not, the allusion of Christ and His apostles to it justifies us in using it as an illustration of Gospel blessing.

I. THE MANNA WAS A PROVISION FOR A GREAT EMERGENCY. There were three millions of famishing people in the wilderness ; they had flocks and herds, it is true, but these were not for food, but for sacrifice. In the third verse the children of Israel thus speak to Moses and Aaron :—" Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full ; for ye have have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Starvation was on them, and already they were in the grasp of death. God sends them manna to their relief.

It is thus with man spiritually ; he is in a famishing state ; he is poor, miserable, blind, naked ; in this sad condition Christ comes to his rescue. "When we were yet without strength"—without strength to do the true work of life, to prepare for death, to gain acceptance with God—"in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

II. THE MANNA CAME AS A MIRACULOUS INTERPOSITION. The manna sprang not from the desert. The Israelites never saw anything like it before. Its very name—which, as some think, means "*What is it?*"—would thus express their wonder at it. "When the children of Israel saw it they said one to another, What is it ? for they wist not what it was."

The interposition of Christ for the world's restoration is a stupendous miracle. He was the Bread that came down from heaven. His history was unique. The world never saw anything like it before. "Great is the mystery of godliness : God manifest in the flesh."

First : *It came undeserved.* Did these murmuring rebellious Israelites deserve the food ? No ! They deserved the terrible death of famine. Did the world deserve the interposition of Christ ? The question itself is a sufficient answer.

Secondly : *It came unsought.* The Israelites prayed not for it. It came without a breath of prayer. The world pleaded not for Christ ; He came as comes the morning sun, unasked.

### III. THE MANNA CAME AS A UNIVERSAL SUPPLY.

First: *It came in quantities commensurate with the wants of all.* "Gather of it every man, according to his eating." Of the three millions, none need die for want. The provisions of the Gospel are commensurate with the wants of all. Isaiah speaks of it as a feast—a feast spread on the "mountain," open to all—a feast given by the "Lord of Hosts," whose resources are infinite—a feast provided for "all people," not one of the race excluded—"a feast of fat things full of marrow, and of wines on the lees well refined."

Secondly: *It came equally within the reach of all.* It was not given to a certain class of men to deal out; it did not fall nearer to one man's tent than another. There it lay in the open wilderness fresh from heaven every morning. Wherever Christianity goes, its blessings fall within the reach of all. "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend up into heaven," &c.

IV. THE MANNA CAME WITH DIVINE DIRECTIONS. The general direction is summed up in the sixteenth verse. "This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man, according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents." The general principle is this:—*Gather it for yourselves, and distribute it to those who need your help.* There were infants, and, perhaps, infirm adults, who could not go out to gather for themselves. Our grand duty in relation to Gospel blessings may be expressed in two words—*appropriation* and *distribution*. This duty was to be performed—

First: *Proportionately.* The command was to gather according to the "*number of your persons,*" and we are told that the children of Israel did so—some more, some less. Some had larger families than others—more dependents—and they required to gather more. It should be somewhat thus in relation to Gospel provisions. Every man should gather for himself; but the man who has a large family, and

a large number of dependents, a larger circle whom he can influence, is especially bound to provide for others. This duty was to be performed—

Secondly: *Betimes*. “And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating ; and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.” He that rose not early in the morning—left not his tent ere the sun came forth in its heat—lost the provisions for the day. The work of religion should be commenced early. Youth is emphatically the morning.

Thirdly: *Regularly*. *Every morning*. “They gathered it every morning.” The supplies of yesterday would not answer for to-day, and those of to-day would not do for to-morrow. It is so in religion. Constancy is the condition of its life and growth ; “so much the more as we see the day approaching.”

V. THE MANNA DEMANDED THE REMEMBRANCE OF POS-  
TERITY. “And Moses said to Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations.” It was laid up in a golden vase, and it came down in the ark until the temple was plundered by the Babylonians about nine hundred years afterwards. It was a fact worthy of commemoration. All God’s interpositions on behalf of the fallen world are facts that shall be had in everlasting remembrance. For this purpose they are recorded in His Word, that shall stand for ever. His interposition in Christ especially calls for our commemoration. He has given us an institution for the very purpose. Let us attend to it in remembrance of Him.

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SUBJECT :—*A Sketch of an Impending Judgment.*

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”—Rev. vii. 1—3.

Analysis of *Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-second.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the deep shadow of mystery that rests upon large portions of this book, there are many parts that can be easily turned to a practical account, and that without committing ourselves to any of the current theories of interpretation. That the text points to a judgment that is overhanging the world, entrusted to angels for its execution, and who are restrained in their work by a special messenger from heaven, on account of the godly tenants of the earth, is a view of the passage which scarcely admits of any data for a different opinion.

From the text we see—

I. THE WORLD EXPOSED TO JUDGMENT. It is represented as exposed “*to the four winds of the earth.*” Winds are the symbols of judgment. Thus in Jeremiah xlix. 36, 37, we read—“And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them towards all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, even my fierce anger, saith the Lord; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them.” And in the prophecy of Daniel (vii. 2), we have these words—“I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.” The *four winds* indicate the universality of the judgment.

ere to come from the four points of the north, south, east, west. Whether this universal refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, or some other event that is passed, or points to some future period in the history of the world, I stay not to

One thing is certain, that *there is a universal impending over this earth*. It hangs over "every the earth." Its winds will rush in fearful tornados the points of the compass. *Conscience, Providence, Bible*, all point to this universal judgment. For a on of this tremendous event, read—Eccles. xii. 14. ; v. 31—33. ; Acts xvii. 31. ; Rom. ii. 3—6. ; Cor. ii. Jude 14, 15. ; 2 Peter iii. 7, 10—12. ; Rev. vi. 12, 12.

the text we see—

THE JUDGMENT ENTRUSTED TO ANGELS. The words "*four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth sea*." Angels are the ministers of God. He employs execute his judgments. (1) They appeared amidst rs of Mount Sinai. (Deut. xxxiii. 2.) "The Lord came ai, and rose up from Seir unto them ; he shined forth unt Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints : right hand went a fiery law for them." Again in viii. 17 we read :—"The chariots of God are twenty l, even thousands of angels : the Lord is among them ai, in the holy place." (2) They appeared with our in the destruction of Jerusalem. (Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.) els have been frequently engaged in executing Divine t on this earth. They acted in connection with the ion of Sodom, and an angel dealt out judgment to the as, in the destruction of their firstborn. (Ex. xii. 22.) el wreaked vengeance on the people of Jerusalem on of the sin of David. (2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17.) An angel d the mighty army of Sennacherib. (2 Kings xix. 35.) els are represented as active in the final day of re- (Matt. xiii. 39, 41 ; xxv. 31 ; 1 Thessa. iv. 16 ;

2 Thess. i. 7—9.) The Eternal Judge then, as now, will work through others.

From the text we see—

III. THE ANGELS RESTRAINED BY A MEDIATOR. “And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” Observe—(1) The glorious origin of this angel. He ascended “from the east.” From the fountain of glory. The east whence the stars appear, and the glorious sun comes forth to flood the world with light. Observe—(2) His Divine credentials. “Having the seal of the living God.” Observe—(3) His great earnestness. “Cried with a loud voice.” Who is this angel? Who is represented in this particular case, I know not. But I know that the Great Angel of the Covenant answers well this description. He came from the orient depths of glory with Divine credentials and with great earnestness, in order to stay the angels of retribution from executing their terrible commission. Our great Redeemer holds back the hand of the destroying angel, and the burden of His intercession is, “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea,” &c. To Christ we owe the postponement of the judgment.

From the text we see—

IV. THE MEDIATOR RESTRAINING BECAUSE HIS WORK IS UNFINISHED. Why does this Intercessory Angel, rising from the glorious east, interpose to prevent the judicial angels from discharging their dread commission? Because there was a work to be done. The servants of God “were to be sealed in their foreheads.” The image of the sealing is derived from the book of the prophet Ezekiel. (ix. 2, 4, 5, 6, 11.) Its object was to mark out certain persons as belonging to God, and thus to save them from the miseries of the impending judgment. The effect of the seal visible in the forehead would be

like that of the blood on the door-posts of the Israelites in the last terrible plague of the Egyptians:—"When he seeth it he will pass over the door and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." Two thoughts are suggested.

First: *That there are men who are yet to receive the seal of God.* Thousands in ages gone by have had His likeness impressed upon them—and thousands are being impressed in this age, but there are millions more to be sealed in future times. There are men from unborn generations who are to be sealed.

Secondly: *That the judgment is delayed until the number of the sealed ones is completed.* "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed," &c.; so that the world is kept up for the "servants" of our God. Thus our blessed Mediator is keeping up the world until all His disciples are gathered into His fold, and His purposes of mercy realized. In the majesty of infinite mercy, He stands as it were in the midst of the universe. He sees the storm of judgment brooding in the heavens; He sees the angels of justice quartered in every part of the firmament ready to execute their terrible commission; He waves His hand and bids them halt. "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads;"—let not even such a breath of judgment pass from your hand as shall wake a ripple on the "sea," or stir a leaf on the "trees;"—let mercy reign supreme until my work is finished. Then, when all my redeemed ones are sealed with the seal of God "on their foreheads," and made secure, then let loose your awful winds. Let them rush with their tornados of fire, and roar with their thunders of retribution, and destroy this earth, for the mystery of God will be finished.

"Accuse not Heaven's delay; if loth to strike,  
Its judgments, like the thunder-gather'd storm,  
Are but the greater."—WEBSTER.

SUBJECT :—*The Greatness of the Redeemer's Life.*

"And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised. There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed."—Ps. lxxii. 15—17.

Analysis of *Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-third.*

**T**HIS Psalm has to do with David, Solomon, and Christ. First: *David's position.* He nears eternity; hands his sceptre over to Solomon, and this with a kingly spirit. He prayed him to his throne. His heart's desire and prayer to God for him was, that his kingdom should be one scene of glory and power. (Read verses 5—11.) Secondly: *The light in which he viewed all Solomon's material glory.* He looked at it, I think, as typical of the Messiah's mediatorial greatness and majesty, in the accession of all nations to His kingdom. (Read especially verses 15—17.) Applying these words to Christ, we observe—

I. THAT THE GREATNESS OF HIS LIFE IS SEEN IN THE MAGNITUDE OF ITS INFLUENCE.

First: *It is co-extensive with creation.* "All nations shall call him blessed." This fact is unique. What man has ever secured the loyal affection of a whole empire? But Christ is to be the centre of universal attraction. Analogy, the greatness of the agencies employed, and the Word of God, warrant the conclusion. What a life is Christ's! "The story of the Cross" (ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ, 1 Cor. i. 18.) has "a power," which nothing else has, to conquer and win human hearts. True to the letter are the words, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Eighteen hundred years have tested this mighty Magnet, Christ, and proved its force, but not weakened it. As surely as the sun draws the circling worlds around it, or as the

lunar orb draws the waters of the ocean towards her, so do souls experience the captivating love of Christ. He attracts the swarthy African, the iron-hearted red Indian, the icy Greenlander, and the subtle Brahmin, and makes them catch the faint reflection and impressive lineaments of His blessed image. Such a life is Grand and Divine !

Secondly : *It is an abiding influence.* "His name shall endure for ever," &c. Rome ran a mighty career of a thousand years, and then it crumbled with corruption, and fell beneath the pressure of ponderous guilt. The life of Christ in His kingdom of redeemed souls is stamped with eternity. "His name shall be continued as long as the sun." That sun that lit the bowers of paradise for the first human pair ; that sun that baked the bricks for the mighty Nimrod to erect the tower of Babel ; that lighted Joshua to fight the battles of God ; and that appalled itself in a robe of darkness when Christ hung upon the Cross—that eternal orb of light is the symbol to teach the indestructible and mighty life of Christ. It is as vast as time, and lasting as eternity. Men, emperors, come and go like baubles upon the stream ; but Christ lives for ever ! Time destroys not His power, but unfolds it. "He reigneth king for ever."

Thirdly : *It is a blissful influence.* "And men shall be blessed in him." A worm may make many miserable ; but it requires a God-like nature to enhance the happiness of one soul. The life of Christ fills creation with blessedness. This Great Benefactor does this by destroying the sources of misery, and by calling into exercise every fountain of bliss in the soul. All hail to Him who puts an end to weeping, and thrills a world of spirits with pulsations of life eternal ! He is the true Restorer, and only Hope of the world.

Fourthly : *It is reflectively glorious.* "And daily shall he be praised." Ten thousand crowns show the victories He has won. He is the grand object of universal admiration and love. Cherubic legions and redeemed men celebrate his victories in everlasting verse. How majestic the *life of the Redeemer.* Already His thoughts of mercy and

love are carried in the soldier's knapsack to the battle plain, and floated by the sailor upon the snow-crested billows to distant climes, making the scenes of conquest and navigation glorious. These thoughts consecrate the marriage feast, render sacred the great cemetery of the dead, and inspire with hope a groaning creation. Ride forth, thou mighty conqueror—Ride ! The text suggests—

II. THAT THE GREATNESS OF HIS LIFE IS DEVELOPED THROUGH MEANS. What are the means ?

First: *Truth*. The Gospel contains the great biography of Jesus, and this is the *mighty instrumentality*. "The weapons of our warfare," &c. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," &c.

Secondly: *Wealth*. "To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba." Ancient conquerors required two things of those whom they had subdued. The one was, to have their names stamped upon the people's money ; the other to be prayed for in their public assemblies. There is an allusion to the custom in the text. The treasures of the Indies, and the gold of the Ganges, are ultimate channels through which Christ will unfold the majesty of His life. Ye men of wealth, remember that every piece of gold and silver—ought to appear to you as if stamped with the image of the Son of God. He says "all the gold, and the silver is mine." Let him have it—to erect temples for His praise and to fill the world with His life, and the joys of His salvation.

Thirdly: *Prayer*. "Prayer shall be made for him continually." We attempt no battle with the sceptic who hinges his quibble upon the Divine immutability. We are content to believe that the man of prayer works out a Divine, an eternal idea ; that in consequence of this fact, he has all the force of the Eternal Will upon his side. He must succeed. He links himself to Omnipotence. Ye men of the Church Catholic, let your wealth be placed upon the altar of the Redeemer's service, as a proof of your love ; and there sanctify it with the prayer of faith, and

the world is the Saviour's. What have you done for your Lord? Worse than Balaklava heights of foes are before you. What is your attitude? The heavens are charged with influences to conquer and to save. "Ask and ye shall receive." "Try me herewith," says God, "and see if I will not open the windows of heaven," &c. The text suggests—

III. THAT THE GREATNESS OF HIS LIFE IS EXPERIENCED IN THE HEAVENWARD DIRECTION IT GIVES MANKIND. He makes men pray to and praise Him. "And daily shall he be praised."

First: *Such persons owe their existence to Christ.* "We are his workmanship."

Secondly: *Such persons are the finest specimens of human excellence.* The highest types of character have always been found in men of earnest prayer. Abraham, Noah, Job, Daniel, Paul, and Christ, all prayed. How the Saviour prayed with groans and tears! He is the Divine Idea of what you and I should be.

Thirdly: *Such men alone fully give scope to their faculties to honor Him.* At the throne of grace we can pour out the treasury of our affections to Him who died for us. It is the *Divine* life of Christ, that draws men's souls to pray and to praise. All souls He thus fills with heavenly affections and power. How God-like such a life! What an expanding and victorious life! Great God, help us to show it in deeds! The text suggests—

IV. THAT THE GREATNESS OF HIS LIFE IS SEEN IN THE REALIZATION THROUGH ETERNITY OF HIS WORK ON EARTH. "He shall live," are words that suggest this truth.

First: *He will live in all that relates to man on earth;* in such things as *institutions, literature, &c.* His name will be emblazoned upon the page of every new work, and His life will be the standard of all institutions.

*Secondly: He will live in the affectionate remembrance of a*



*redeemed people.* On the throne of their hearts He will ever abide. "That in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

Thirdly : *He will live as the expression of all excellence.* Foremost upon the throne, He stands as the embodiment and expression of all *love, benevolence, truth, justice, and authority.* He is God revealed to the intelligent universe. What a sight ! Who will be prepared thus to see God ?

Fourthly : *He will live as the centre of all attraction to the glorified Church.* As Benefactor, He will appeal to our gratitude. What blood but His secured our pardon ? As our King, He will appeal to our loyalty. Whose shall we be but His, who won us by His love ? As our representative and pledge of glory, He appeals to our aspirations after immortality. His history will afford infinite scope for study, and every new discovery of Him will entwine our affections around His great heart for ever. "He shall live" through the vast cycles of eternity, in the affections of redeemed and beatified men. What a vision does our subject open to view, of "Emmanuel, God with us." Generations come and go, but "He lives." Friends fling a single glance upon us and pass into the regions of the dead, but "He lives," and remains "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Emperors grasp the sceptre, and put on the crown, and death wrenches the one from them, and time decays the other ; but immortality blazes upon Prince Messiah, and time only adds lustre to His diadem and felicity to His reign. In the language of the Church we would say, "Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious name ; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory : glory be to Thee, O Lord, Most High !" Thou King of Saints, Thy life Divinely pure shall be our model ; Thy heart of boundless love shall be the sun to thaw the cold stillness of wintry death, that binds our souls in perpetual chains. Then shall they swell with strange and heavenly emotions, and expand into Diviner life. The seed of life Thou hast dropped into the soil of human spirit, and "the

fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." The scenes of life are ever brightening and widening ; and new fields of beauteous scenery are evermore depicted to our gaze, in which we descry the sublime, the lovely life of Jesus, the "Lord of Glory."

*Emmanuel Church,  
Camberwell.*

J. H. HILL.



SUBJECT :—*The Sins of Godly Men.*

"And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim : but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless : for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him ; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood."—1 Kings ii. 8, 9.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-fourth.*

**I**T is a profound question, yet one which ought not to concern us overmuch, though at times our attention is perforce attracted to it : In what greater degree are men responsible for their characters than for their deficiency of brain or deformity of limb ? It is our first plea for the murderer, the eccentric, the suicide, that they are the victims of temporary insanity or of uncontrollable passion, and that their ebullition in any particular instance was due more to the vehemence of natural character than to depravity of mind. Professors of mere worldly morality are generally very willing to put the best construction on equivocal acts of men of their own stamp. Generosity of this kind, though antagonistic to justice, has that about it which the most rigid justiciary cannot utterly condemn ; but by a strange contradiction and revulsion of sentiment, the same men look for the most absolute perfection and spotless purity of character in others who strive humbly to walk in

the way of Heaven's uprightness. What these critics never attempt themselves, they deem the easiest possible matter for other persons to perform. They, it may be, revel secretly in mire, yet are the first to point the finger of scorn at the faintest blemish in those they affect to despise. They brand the endeavor of others to avoid evil as a profession of Pharisæic sanctity; and instead of honoring a man for the struggles and self-denial which he has endured in his attempt to overcome the wrong, they point with exultation to those of his acts in which it is evident he has not succeeded in his righteous intent.

A man of God still retains to the very last the bias of nature his Maker endowed him with at the first. Christianity does not reduce men to one dead level, it rather brings out in greater relief those parts of our character which are in harmony with its principles, while tending to tone down others with which it has no affinity.

If, then, the good man in this present age is so misunderstood, and his actions so unmercifully criticized, what little chance is there of the characters of men in past times being rightly appreciated and justly dealt with? It is here that history fails, and men's names obtain a lustre or a tarnish most unjustly through the narrow presentation of their lives as viewed by the standard of the present day. To appreciate or condemn hastily, in the same way as our historians libel a man in terse stereotyped phrase, as being a wretch or a saint, is most unjust. Whatever their degree, we must recollect the age they lived in, the circumstances surrounding them, the habits of thought in which they were bred, and the silent influence of the customs and actions of their contemporaries. The Almighty is ever the same, but the peoples of every age, in every land, differ from their sires. Races, like their languages, are expunged from the earth, melting away as a mass, and re-absorbed in fragments, losing thereby for ever their individuality. Where once the stalwart Roman stood—there now the effeminate Italian basks in languid ease. The bandit lurks where erst the philosopher

Greek discoursed. All this the Almighty recollects if we forget ; and assuredly will judge men as well from that outside them, as from that within their hearts. The world to Him is one vast school which He is educating. The men of old knew but the alphabet, we now should be the ripest scholars. Knowledge in those old times was as the first faint gleam of daylight on the horizon ; but it now sheds its light as the noonday sun. Let us then approach, with all humility, the subject before us, remembering that in judging others harshly, we doubly criminate ourselves.

There are three ways in which David may have been influenced in giving this dying injunction to his son :—

I. AS THE AGENT, UNCONSCIOUS OR OTHERWISE, OF DIVINE JUSTICE. We cannot conceive this measure as being the consummation of a Divine purpose, it had apparently so much about it of human plan. The Almighty's power, when exerted in support of justice, has always been certain and direct in its action, without any reference to contingencies. A man's punishment never precedes his crime, nor is inflicted without one. It comes down from heaven direct upon him, without equivocation or compromise. All is clear ; the books are open, wherein the crime was writ just as it occurred. Heaven's reporters are hovering near us, ever busy, always transcribing into those terrible volumes. With God it is all justice or all mercy ; no half measures. No sparing for a time in uncertainty or doubt as to our guilt, begetting in us a sense of false security, till suddenly the knell of doom sounds on our deafened ears. How different from man's punishment this. The very manner of Shimei's death is the greatest argument against its having been ordained by God. (verses 36—46.) Even David and his son were ashamed of it ; and shall God be credited with what they despised ? For the honor of his father's name, as well as his own, Solomon disguised his real object by laying a trap for Shimei, puerile in its meanness, and yet sufficient to attain the end desired. How men must have wondered, and become awed, extolling, may-be, the rigid

fulfilment of his kingly word, which was only the flimsy cloak to a planned death. Men have often suffered by such means. Their enemies, anxious for their destruction, out of envy, hatred, or malice, have concealed their real motives, which were personal, under pretexts that were apparently unconnected in every way with their wishes or desires.

David's conduct in giving this dying injunction to his son may have been influenced—

II. BY A CONSCIENTIOUS DESIRE TO ADMINISTER HUMAN JUSTICE, ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD. David, we are told, was a man of God, one after His own heart. Intimately acquainted with the Divine nature—keenly alive to Heaven's requirements—and inspired most devoutly with the desire to imitate his Maker's character—he is prominently put forth as, in many respects, the model of a godly man. "O, how I love thy law," he cries. He loved it for its holiness, revered it for its perfection, thus showing he was not afraid of its severity. How, then, with such clear perceptions of the Divine attributes, can we conceive of him as acting in this matter conscientiously and with cool judgment, in the full belief of the harmony of his decree with Almighty rectitude! To do so is to dishonor the unswerving uprightness of God's justice, or to depreciate David's experiences and knowledge of the Divine character. We would rather be left to our final alternative in—

III. REGARDING HIS INJUNCTION AS PROMPTED BY REVENGE. As a man he forgave Shimei at the time of his crime, which, then, should have been utterly effaced from his memory. Heavenly justice, if not satisfied, would have taken its own way of vindicating itself, without further action on David's part. Eastern habits and usages, though fearfully vindictive until revenge or mediation was effected, were all against the remembrance of the deed done unto him after it had once been forgiven. To the present day the rigid hospitality and oath of an Arab to his enemy, when thrown

on his honor, is proverbial. With David, as a man of God and Israel's law-giver, we must utterly disconnect this act, and attribute it entirely to a flaw in his character, which, at the last, re-asserted its natural power in antagonism to Divine grace.

Feud and retaliation have ever been the precursors of law, order, and Christianity; and even now, among some nations, one of the most sacred principles a man acknowledges is to avenge a loved one's death, or his own personal wrong, till the third and fourth generations. It is the hard unbroken ground of nature, untouched by the dew and sun of heaven. Undoubtedly in David's time, this custom of revenge and retaliation was rife among the Eastern nations, along with many other practices at variance with progress and religion. Men were brought up to them, accepted them as their moral clothing, and acted up conscientiously to their injunctions. So it was with David; though a man of God, in whom He delighted, yet the customs of his time, the habits of thought of those about him, with the silent effect of their example, had unknown, maybe, to him, so impregnated his being, as to germinate into ungodly actions at any sudden temptation or crisis, with sufficient power to sweep away, for a time, the tuition and principles of his heavenly life.

In nothing, during life, do men differ so greatly as at death. The weakest on earth often enter the gates of heaven triumphant. While yet in the flesh, one foot is firmly planted on the threshold of the mansion prepared for them. On the other hand, the spiritual giant now is frequently then but as a timid and fearful child; often, indeed, appearing to lose his entire spiritual existence in the fearful struggle which Satan and his earthly nature keep up in endeavoring to wrest another soul from heaven to people the wilderness of hell.

In David's case, what mighty lessons this should teach. Here was a patriarch indeed, at the last moments of his existence succumbing to the seducing wiles and powerful instincts of his grosser nature. Men may well dread death, for then is the last great struggle between earth and heaven—*nay hell and heaven*; *it is Satan's last chance*, for, seeing the hovering

wings of death slowly enfolding its object, he knows the hour of physical pain and weakness approaches, so puts forth his mighty energies in one last grand endeavor, in which the deadliest hate and fear, and every terrible passion is at work, striving to counteract the power of his Almighty antagonist. But the Almighty knows him and He knows us. Like David, we may be vengeful on our death-bed; our spirits may become dim, and weak, and faint; yet, He knows our hearts, that we are in Him, and He in us, and pardons the wanderings of our faltering footsteps as we totter to His threshold; until, as we gain the door and faintly knock, it opens wide, disclosing a scene of light, and joy, and bliss, with the inspiring words sounding gladly in our ears:—"Be of good courage, I will never leave thee or forsake thee."

R. LISWIL, B.A.

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## Biblical Criticism.

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### THE CODEX SINAITICUS:—*Various Readings.*

HAVING thus closely followed the Codex through the first two Gospels, the reader will probably think with us that enough has been done to show the general character of the variations, and the essential agreement of this newly-discovered manuscript with the readings of the Received Text. We shall, therefore, now break off this detailed inquiry, and satisfy what of curiosity may remain, by giving the readings of the Codex in a few celebrated passages in various parts of the New Testament, and then, for the present, take leave of the subject.

In Luke vi. 1, the word *δευτεροπρώτη*, which has given much trouble to commentators, is omitted, as it is in the Vatican, and in several other manuscripts.

In John i. 18, there is a very interesting variation. Instead of *υἱός*, we have *Θεός*, so that the clause reads in English,

"The only-begotten *God*, which is in the bosom of the Father," &c. In this reading, the new Codex agrees with the Vatican, the Codex Ephraemi, the Peshito Syriac Version, and many places in the Fathers.

Acts viii. 37 is wanting, as in the Alexandrine, the Vatican; and the Codex Ephraemi.

Acts xx. 28.—The reading here is Θεοῦ, as in the received text. Θεοῦ is the reading of the Vatican; but the Alexandrine, the Codex Ephraemi, the Codex Bezae, and the Codex Claromontanus, read κυρίου.

1 Cor. xiii. 3.—This Codex has καυχῆσθαι, instead of καθήσθαι. "And though I give my body *that I may boast*," &c.

Eph. i. 1.—The words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ are wanting; which agrees with the Vatican, and countenances the opinion that this Epistle was a circular letter addrest to other cities besides Ephesus, perhaps to Laodicea among the rest. Col. iv. 16.

1 Tim. iii. 16.—The original text of this Codex has not Θεός, but ὁς, which was before regarded by the best critics as the true reading, and may now be considered as almost unquestionably so. (Compare Col. i. 27.) Lachmann and Tischendorf both had adopted ὁς, before the discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus. The doctrine of Christ's Deity has sufficient Scriptural proof without needing unsound evidence. If the original reading were—as we believe it was—ὁς, we can understand how its apparent difficulty might have occasioned the substitution of Θεός for it, as indeed a corrector of the twelfth century has actually inserted it above the line in the Codex Sinaiticus without however, erasing the ὁς in its proper place. But if Θεός had been the original reading, it is inconceivable that any scribe, however meddling and rash, should have substituted ὁς. According to Wetstein, Porson, Griesbach, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Davidson, the original reading of the Alexandrine Codex was ὁς. That this was also the original reading of the Codex Ephraemi, is the opinion of Wetstein, Griesbach, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Davidson.

1 John v. 7, 8.—The words from ἐν τῷ ὕδατι in the 7th



verse, as far as ἐν τῇ γῇ in the 8th, are wanting. They are also absent from the Alexandrine and Vatican, *and from every Greek manuscript before the fifteenth century.* They are not found in the old manuscripts of the Vulgate and Syriac Versions; nor are they quoted by the Fathers, even in places where we might have expected it, had the manuscripts they used coincided with the Received Text.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studios young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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WITH all their shortcomings and faults, men of modern ages are in a better moral condition than the ancients. While they have on the whole more of godliness and more of humanity than of old, they have, also, a deeper, more uneasy, and painful sense of shortcomings and faults. Combined with this uneasiness, there is an aspiration, a hopefulness; and there is much of actual progress, of moral amendment and improvement, as generation succeeds generation. This deeper moral feeling appears not only in modern life, individual and social, but in literature and the arts. Modern laws, manners, and customs, are on the whole more moral than the ancient. There is evident in them a deeper sense of the worth and sacredness of human nature. What we may call the moral attitude of the English towards each other, has often more of dignity, implied significance, and spiritual tenderness, than is ever observable among the Greeks. If English conversation seldom equals the Platonic dialogue in dialectic precision, or in the charms of the fancy, it often far surpasses even that in moral purity and depth.

The ancient historian records political events, whose causes are political ; the modern historian has to trace the causes of wars and revolutions further back into the mysterious recesses of man's nature.

In the Homeric poems, there is a child-like echo of Nature's joyous music ; evil passions are represented rather according to their calamitous effects than their essential nature. The ills of life are pathetically lamented ; the domestic virtues and affections are sung with due tenderness. Yet the want of true Divine reverence renders Homer, with all his beauty and power, morally superficial. The reader of "Hamlet" finds himself in another world, with an indefinite spiritual circuit, and suggestions of mysterious hope and fear, of infinity and eternity.

A similar contrast is presented between the Parthenon and Westminster Abbey. The one is beautiful, indeed ; but it is a shallow beauty, which is at once understood, reaching no further than the eye. The symmetry of the other is not so plain. It was built under the sense of an Infinite Presence, and suggests both reverence and aspiration. If the music and painting of the Greeks are lost, it is not likely that they possessed anything which approached the region of Handel ; and the cartoons of Raphael would in the ancient world have been in every sense an impossibility.

Men of modern times, then, have in their conscience, and manifest in their manners and laws, literature and arts, a familiarity with a higher standard of morality than was generally known of old. With this they are ever, consciously or unconsciously, comparing themselves ; towards correspondence with this they are ever aspiring. They show a knowledge of a whole region of rich morality which was hid from the ancients. There can be no doubt but that this higher moral standard was first promulgated, this new region of moral truth first disclosed, and the consequent change from the ancient to the modern character begun, about the time of the Christian era. Were it possible for an accurate observer to be kept in ignorance

of the cause of this great moral revolution, and to see only the phenomena, he would declare the commencement of it to be contemporary with the early Christian age. Being then acquainted with the facts which give character to that age, he would decide in their favor as the cause of the revolution; he would attribute the moral difference between ancient and modern times, to the appearance and history of Jesus Christ.

The first teachers of Christianity effected this moral revolution. Their undertaking required inestimable power, which, however, they were conscious of possessing, and the result justified their boldness. What was the power by which they contended successfully with Jews, and Greeks, and Barbarians? It was not mainly the power of working miracles; far less was it mere eloquence. It was essentially a moral power. They had received a singular impression of the excellence of a Person whom they had familiarly known. His character was absolutely new; not only realising the best ideas of the best moralists, but far surpassing their loftiest flights. This impression was their own strength, and they were able to impart it to others. It is the character of Jesus Christ which is found in the last analysis to have been essentially the power which subverted Paganism, led captive men of all nations by a mysterious and irresistible charm; it was this which dispelled their ignorance, overcame their prejudice, and founded a new and universal community of a new humanity, which was irrespective of nation and even of sex.

If the character of Jesus Christ was the strength of Christianity then, the relation remains the same for ever. Every real acquisition now, is made in the same manner. The infidel or the heathen perceives Christ's perfection, and yields himself to Christ as the highest Being he knows, the highest he can conceive, and whom he loves and trusts immeasurably. Only as the true character of Christ is clearly and purely exhibited, may Christians now expect their number to increase. The propagative power of Christianity is the central truth of Christianity.

In order to self-preservation, Christianity requires constant renewal by returning back into itself. Thus only can its genuine character be retained. Thus, also, it is to be emphasized. The generation which has the clearest view and the firmest grasp of the character of Christ, will possess the most genuine and the most vigorous Christianity.

The excellence of Christ has a charm even for the little child. It subdues the savage. But with every new degree of moral and intellectual cultivation, and every new acquisition of experience, the simple narrative of the Evangelists acquires new and grander significance, and asserts a mightier influence. It is so both with progressive individuals and with progressive society. There is, indeed, no limit to this increasing significance and power.



## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.



*The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.*

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."—Matt. xxii. 39.

THE person to whose question the answer was given, of which the text forms a part, was a Pharisee, a lawyer, and a scribe. His question, *Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?* was characteristic of the class to which he belonged, who liked better to dispute about the comparative importance of commands than to obey them. The Lord in answer, refers to the Book of Deuteronomy vi. 4, 5, for the first great command, and to the Book of Leviticus xix. 18, for the second. He made a practice in his teaching, especially when in the hearing of the Pharisees, of referring to the Law,

rather than announce new doctrines on His own authority. The authority of the Law was acknowledged, and this gave Him the opportunity of blaming the neglect of it, and of pointing out its spiritual meanings. By this habit, moreover, He put His own stamp on the Old Testament, and showed that His teaching was one with its teaching, and was founded upon it; and that His coming was the fulfilment of prophecy. If the men of His generation were bound to believe in Him because the Law bore witness to Him, we are no less bound to believe the Law because He bears witness to the Law. But He does not simply refer to the Law. He amplifies it; giving it a wider interpretation than was familiar to His hearers. So when another lawyer (Luke x. 29) asked Him in reply to a similar answer to a like question, *And who is my neighbour?* Jesus teaches him by the parable of the Good Samaritan that his neighbours were not Jews only, but that neighbourly offices and kindness were due to all with whom he came in contact. In the passage of Leviticus, from which the text is quoted, the word *neighbour* is used of brethren who were of the nation of Israel, *the children of thy people*. But interpreted by the parable of the Good Samaritan, the word is extended to men in general. We are bound by Christ's law to regard men as our neighbours, without respect of class or of nation, and *to love them as ourselves*.

At the same time, we cannot help admiring the wisdom which has chosen the unostentatious term *neighbour*. Some persons profess to be general philanthropists, and it is a very common remark, that such as are the loudest and most pretentious professors of an indefinite good-will towards the whole race of mankind, are often cold and unfeeling towards those particular members of it with whom they are the most nearly conversant. The Bible is not a book of theory, but of practice. It does not require from us a showy, universal benevolence; but what, though less pretending, is of greater importance, that we should love *our neighbours as ourselves*.

No one who has thoughtfully compared the spirit of the old Pagan world with that of modern Christian society, can have failed to perceive a great difference. With all the faults of the present, it is immeasurably superior to the past. The superiority is especially and remarkably obvious in regard to the estimate of human nature. In Egypt, Greece, and Rome, the multitude were comparatively uncared for. They were used by their superiors ; but the notion of duty towards them, founded on their partaking of common human nature, was rare and uninfluential. The poor were unprovided for. Great public charities, schools for the people, hospitals for the sick, the parochial system, and a general recognition of man as such—in conversation, manners, laws, and above all in that inward sentiment of humanity which is now largely implied in our conversation and manners, and on which our laws are largely based—all these belong characteristically, if not exclusively, to modern times. The inward sentiment of society underwent, in this respect, a marvellous revolution about the time of the Christian era. It was then that men began to feel the value of man. This fundamental change was due to the example, the teaching, and the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of this sentiment of humanity the New Testament is full. There had been a new revelation of God, and this involved a new revelation of man. There had been an outburst of Divine love towards us, and this taught us to love one another. Christ had closed a life of love by dying for us, and the impression of His Spirit taught the observance of His command, taken indeed from the Old Testament, but issued with a new meaning by Him, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*.

I. The text recognizes the principle that *some of God's commands are greater than others*.

The lawyer asks, *Which is the great commandment in the law ?* Jesus finds no fault with the phraseology of the question, but uses it in His answer: *This is the first and great commandment. . . And the second is like unto it. . . On*

*these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* According to Christ's teaching, there are two commands which exceed all the others in greatness.

One command may be greater than another *because it is founded in eternal truth and fitness.* God may command whatever pleases Him, and whatever He commands we are bound submissively to observe. He has seen fit to command some things for which the reason was temporary and circumstantial. This was the case with the great body of the precepts of the ancient law of rites and ceremonies. He has seen fit to command some other things for which there was no reason but His will; as for instance when He commanded Adam to abstain from the fruit of a certain tree, in mark of homage to his Creator, Sovereign and Benefactor. Any other abstinence or action might, so far as we can see, have answered the purpose; but God chose to institute this, which, therefore, was made binding. But there are other commands again which are founded on the nature of things, and these are the greatest. Our duty to worship and serve God, depends on His glorious perfection, and on our relation to Him as creatures and constant recipients of His bounty. Our duty to speak the truth to each other, and to respect each other's life and property, is founded in nature, and is enforced by revelation. The command in the text has this original, unchangeable character. Because man is what he is, it is his duty to love his neighbour as himself.

One command, again, may be greater than another *because it comprehends that other.* We must not lie, and we must not steal. It would be hard to tell which was of the greater importance. Such duties are mostly on a level, nor does one comprehend another; but love comprehends them all. He who loves his neighbour, will certainly not deceive him to his hurt, nor defraud, nor oppress him. If men loved one another, there need be no severe laws for the preservation of order, and the safety of life and property. If men loved one another, class would never be provoked by class to rise up in

riot, intent on violence and revolution. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour ; wherefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* He who loves his neighbour as himself, will not be content with doing him mere justice, but will proceed to kindness and the mercy whose *quality is not strained* by rules.

II. The text represents *humanity as equally important with godliness.* "This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it."

It is like it in *foundation.* Both are based on unchangeable truth and fitness. And it is like it in *comprehensiveness ;* for as love to God includes and ensures all duty towards Him, so love to our neighbour includes and ensures all duty towards man.

It is *so like it, that the two commandments are dependent on each other for fulfilment.* Love to God and love to man cannot exist separately. The same disposition of heart fulfils both commandments. They are *alike in their objects,* God and man, for man is made in the image of God. They are, therefore, *witnesses to each other, in respect both to obedience and disobedience.* You cannot be right with man unless you are right with God ; you cannot be right with God unless you are right with man. You cannot atone for impiety towards God by good-nature towards your fellow ; nor can you atone for injustice or unkindness to man by scrupulous attention to the forms of religion. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar ; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?* Therefore the Church requires from those who come to the Holy Table, that they "be in perfect charity with all men."

III. The text makes *self-love the standard of love to our neighbour.*

Self-love, or a regard for our own happiness, is an *ineradicable instinct of nature.* It is as much a part of our



nature as the desire for food. It is altogether distinct from selfishness. Selfishness is inconsistent with good-will to our neighbour ; self-love is coincident with love to our neighbour. We cannot much benefit him, if we neglect our own interests ; and, on the other hand, by benefitting him we are benefitting ourselves. Such is the connection of man with man, of Christian with Christian. The doctrine that we are *members one of another*, is no mere exhortation, but an original fact of nature ; a fact emphasized by grace, and upon it the exhortation is founded. Our mutual dependence has been a part of our constitution from the very first. The Bible is so far from condemning self-love, which is a due regard to our own well-being, that it is constantly appealed to as in the text. There is no reason to wish that self-love were weaker in the world than it is, but quite the contrary. It were well for the individual and the community if self-love were generally better understood and more completely followed. The mistake has been in supposing that there is any measure of inconsistency between self-love and the love of our neighbour, instead of seeing that they are mutually helpful, and that each completes and supplements the other.

Our Lord requires in the text, not only that we have the *same kind* of love for others as we have for ourselves, but that our love to others should *bear a due proportion* to our love to ourselves. What the due proportion is, the text does not obviously determine. The Divine Law does not require impossibilities. Every man has necessarily a closer and more impressive perception of his own wants than he can have of the wants of others, even of his nearest relations and dearest friends. The very use of the word *neighbour*, πλησίον, one who is *near* to us, whom we know and ought to feel for *next* to ourselves, points this way. Yet we may well believe that the more our love to our neighbour approaches *equality* with our love to ourselves, the nearer we come to conformity with the perfect Law.

IV. It must also be remembered, that, as self-love is

*elevated, and its limits extended by the Gospel, so love to our neighbour, of which the other is the standard, is heightened and enlarged also.* Without the Gospel, self-love were a far meaner thing. It would respect merely our worldly interests, with perhaps some very indefinite and uncertain aspiration and hope of Divine approval and of future happiness.

But self-love is exalted and amplified by Christianity. The Gospel tells me that God is my Father, that I am very dear to Him, that to rescue me from ruin and bring me to Himself in forgiveness and peace, He has *not spared His Only-begotten Son*, and that His Spirit is continually striving to renew in me my Father's image. The Gospel tells me that, by taking my nature, Christ has not only shown how highly He valued it, but has imparted to it a new and incalculable value and dignity. Thus the Gospel inspires me with a new and noble self-love, since it gives me an unspeakably wider and brighter view than I had without it, of my true interest, and of the blessings which I am chosen to attain. It fills me with new hopes, aspirations, aims.

But as the Gospel enhances and ennobles my self-love, so it enhances and ennobles my love to my neighbour, which, according to the Divine Law of our text, is referred to the other as a standard. My neighbour is now no longer merely my human brother; he is my brother in Christ. He is my neighbour in the kingdom of heaven. None of these blessings are mine in any sense in which they do not belong to him also. He also is a child of God. Together we bend before the throne with *Our Father* on our lips. His is that nature which Christ assumed, for which Christ has died, which Christ has taken up to heaven. *By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.* Therefore in proportion to my desire to avail myself of these stupendous blessings, must be my desire to further them amongst my neighbours, fellow-partakers of grace, joint-heirs of glory.

Alas! that it should be necessary to add, that there is no duty which Christians need to be reminded of more constantly and earnestly, than this of love to their neighbour. The love

of God is an obviously supreme obligation. The worship and service of God are, in some sort at least, performed by most. It is easy to make a profession of godliness, but to test the sincerity of that profession is not so easy. We cannot pry into each other's hearts, and we are forbidden to make the attempt. But the love of our neighbour is something more palpable, since it is easy to be tested by works. And this love of our neighbour is too generally neglected. Yet, as we have seen, without this, in vain are our loudest and showiest professions of godliness. Without this, religion is a delusion. Without this, vain are all our knowledge, orthodoxy, and ritual correctness. Oh! it is most sad to see a Christian who has not learned this first lesson in Christ's school; who has no delight in the establishment or extension of Christ's kingdom, but has to be stimulated by other considerations to contribute money; who can enjoy his own good things undisturbed by the sufferings of the poor and the anxieties of the needy; who professes himself a disciple of the Most Merciful, while his heart is the home of selfishness. Let such persons be told that if they suppose themselves to be in any wise worthy of their Christian calling, or to be aught but abominable in God's sight, they are deceiving themselves. *Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* God grant that such may awake ere they hear the fearful words, *Forasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto ME*—that their hearts may be so melted by the love of Christ, as to be turned to that mercy towards others, without which, in vain will they look to find it for themselves!

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### ABRAHAM'S INTERCESSION FOR SODOM.

"And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but *this once*: Peradventure ten shall

be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."—Gen. xviii.23—33.

THIS is one of the most ancient prayers on record; and it is certainly one of the most wonderful. It throws light upon the good and the evil of the world, and upon the connection of the great God with both. It teaches two things which are especially worthy of our notice, inasmuch as it shows what man may become and what man may achieve on this earth. It reveals—

I. THE CLOSE INTIMACY WHICH A GOOD MAN MAY HAVE WITH HIS MAKER. "And Abraham drew near and said," &c. The patriarch feels himself in the very presence of the Almighty. Three things indicate his closeness of intimacy. First: *He knew his Maker's purpose.* The Eternal had treated him as a friend, and made him His confidant. He told him what He intended doing with Sodom, the adopted country of his nephew Lot. Shall I hide

from Abraham the thing that I do?" said the Almighty. No! He had it not in His heart to hide it from His friend. He told him, and Abraham's mind was full of it now, full of God's thought, and with this great thought filling his nature, he entered into His presence. A great thought from God taken into our being will carry us into His presence. Secondly: *He felt His Maker's presence.* He spoke to Him—to Him, not as an element, a power, an abstraction, but to Him as a *person* with whom he was in felt contact. He felt God to be the most *real* object in the universe to him, filling his inner horizon with His presence, and flooding his nature with strange emotions. Thirdly: *He heard his Maker's voice.* He heard the answer to every petition head-dressed, from the "fifty" down to the "ten." He felt within him the warm responses of the Deity to all the entreaties of his soul. He heard God. Such was the close intimacy which Abraham, the friend of God, now had with his Maker. Was this privilege something restricted to the patriarch, or is it a blessing to which all the good are welcome? The latter, I venture to believe. Enoch and Noah walked with God. Moses spoke to Him. David "felt

him always before him," &c. The grand object of Christ's mediation was to promote this intimacy between man and his Maker. "He hath ascended on high, led captivity captive: received gifts for men; that the Lord God might dwell among us." Oh! to have this intimacy, to have our minds filled with God's great thought, feel ourselves in His great presence, and hear His voice responding to all the profound aspirations of our nature. This is religion—this is heaven.

"Oh! for a closer walk with God,  
A calm, a heavenly frame."

II. THE WONDERFUL INFLUENCE WHICH A GOOD MAN MAY HAVE OVER HIS MAKER. A sceptical philosophy will sneer at such an assertion as this; yet the record of Abraham's intercession justifies it, nay, demands it. Six times the patriarch prays, and every time he gains his point; and we are left to infer, that if he had persevered in the line of supplication he was pursuing, he would have revoked the judgment of Heaven and saved Sodom. Heaven ceased to grant, only as Abraham ceased to ask. A prayer exerting such an influence upon the Divine mind, certainly deserves to be well considered.

What were its characteristics? First: *It was definite.* The patriarch had one object in view—the salvation of Sodom. That object filled and fired his soul. I consider this definiteness an essential element of true prayer. Modern prayers, in which the petitioner frequently asks for all the variety of objects which his imagination can suggest, are not prayers at all in the Biblical sense. Nearly all, if not all, the successful prayers of the Bible are brief and definite; examples—Bartimæus, the publican, penitent thief, &c. A long wordy prayer, like a volume of ciphers—stands for nothing. His prayer—Secondly: *Was unselfish.* Some men's prayers are the breathings of selfishness; greed running into devotion. The burden of all is protection from all evil, possession of all good. In this prayer of the patriarch there is not one particle of this. The man loses self in the interests of Sodom. The men of Sodom are everything to him; he is but "dust and ashes." A benevolent prayer must ever be mighty because it chimes in with the eternal will of Heaven, which is benevolence. His prayer—Thirdly: *Was trustful.* Some prayers are irreverent, dictatorial. The Almighty is often told *what He ought to do, what*

He should do. I often think there is as much profanity in some prayers as in the oaths of the vulgar blasphemer. How reverentially trustful is the patriarch's prayer: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" As if he had said, "I have the utmost confidence that whatever thou doest will be right." True prayer leaves the results with God. "Not my will, but thine be done." To work the human will into a submission to the Divine, is *true* prayer. His prayer—Fourthly: *Was humble.* How profoundly abased he appears in the presence of his Maker. "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." No man can approach the Almighty in the true spirit of prayer, without having profound consciousness of the infinite disparity between him and his Maker. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." There is much pride in modern prayer. In some cases there is a familiarity that is most unseemly and revolting. His prayer—Fifthly: *Was importunate.* He throws his whole nature into his petitions. His soul is on fire with the object he seeks, and he pleads and pleads again. Our prayers are often awfully mechanical, mere leverage, not volition—

a thing of lip, not life. Jacob wrestling with the angel, and the importunate widow, are types of earnest prayer. It was this definite, unselfish, trustful, humble, importunate prayer, that obtained this influence with Heaven; and this is the kind of prayer that ever has succeeded, and always will. This is the kind of prayer to which answers are promised, and to which answers are always given. With this kind of prayer Moses saved the Israelites, Elijah sealed and unsealed the heavens, the disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem brought down the Pentecostal showers.

Learn, brother, from this subject two things. First: *The spiritual blessedness of a good man.* What intimacy with, and what influence upon, the Almighty has he. Learn—Secondly: *The social value of a good man.* Abraham was almost saving Sodom. Well does our Saviour call the godly the “the light of the world,” the “salt of the earth.” Verily they are so. They are the safe-guards of the nation. Every good man is a link in that golden chain with which mercy belts the human world, and prevents the explosive force of its sins from riving it to pieces.

#### THE IMMORTALITY OF LOVE

“Charity never faileth.”—1 Cor. xiii. 8.

CHARITY means *love*;—not a gregarious sentiment, a sectarian sympathy, or a mere passing affection, however rightly directed, but a generous moral sympathy with the race, springing from a dominant affection for the Creator: that which Jesus embodied in perfection.\* Amongst the many things which Paul predicates in this magnificent chapter concerning love, is its *Permanence*.

I. IT WILL “NEVER FAIL” AS AN ELEMENT OF MORAL POWER. Love is the strongest force in the soul. First: *It is the strongest sustaining power.* Our present state is one of trial and sorrow. Burdens press on all, in all grades of society. Godly love is the best sustaining power under all; it is the only power that can appropriate the upholding promises of God. All Divine promises are made to the loving. Secondly: *It is the strongest resisting power.* We have not only burdens to oppress, but enemies to wound and destroy. If love pre-occupies the soul, temptations are powerless. No one can draw us astray unless he enlists in some degree our

\* See “Homilist,” Vol. I, New Series, p. 433.

affections, and if our love be centred on God we are immoveable. Love builds around the soul a rampart, so invulnerable, that the attacks of the enemy fall on it but to rebound. Thirdly: *It is the strongest aggressive power.* We have not only to bear up with fortitude under trials, and to resist with success temptations, but we have battles to fight and victories to win. Love is at once the inspiration and the qualification for the warfare; it at once constrains and arms us in the battle. There is nothing so aggressive in the moral world as love. It is a fire that spreads its flames until it encompasses all the objects within its sphere. Man can stand before anything sooner than love. He who wields the bayonet and the sword may be laughed to scorn, but he who wields the argument of love employs a power to subdue the spirit. Men instinctively throw open their hearts to the admission of the generous and the kind, but bolt them as with irons against the selfish and malign. As a sustaining, resisting, aggressive power, love will "never fail." All the energies of the soul grow under its influence as nature under the sky of spring. It is the breath of God, the atmosphere in which spirits revel

in the vigor of undying youth.

II. IT WILL "NEVER FAIL" AS A PRINCIPLE OF SOCIAL UNITY. Deep in the heart of man is the desire for union with his fellow. Isolation and division are naturally repugnant to his social nature. He wishes to flow with the race as waters with the stream. His ingenuity has been taxed for ages in the invention of schemes for union. As the result we have a number of confederations, some based on political sympathy, some on material interests, some on theological dogmas, some on mere carnal affinities; but there is no real *soul union* in these, no coalition of hearts. Love alone can secure this. We are only one with those we love with the moral affections of our nature. But we can only love the loveable. True, but love is the loveable. It is this charity, this Divine love in another that invests him with beauty, and gives him a power to draw to him the love of his fellows. Two really loving souls are one. Love in the moral empire is what attraction is in the material; uniting those together who are united with the centre of their being. This is the principle by which Christ binds His people together in one, and binds



them to the hierarchies of the good : it "never faileth" as a principle of social unity.

III. IT WILL "NEVER FAIL" AS A SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL HAPPINESS. Love is joy. First: *It expels from the mind all the elements unfavorable to happiness.* Malice, envy, avarice, jealousy, "fear which hath torment," and remorse, revenge, and all such affections, which are the fountains of spiritual misery, can no more co-exist with heavenly love than frost in the tropics or darkness in the noon-tide sun. Secondly: *It generates in the mind all the elements of spiritual joy,—hope, gratitude, adoration, and delightful sympathies with man, the universe, and God.* Love sets all the strings of life's lyre to music, it brings the soul like a wandered orb from chaos, links it to its own centre, and fills it with the light and life of heaven. It "*never faileth*" as a source of joy.

Brother, get this unailing thing within thee; it is the pulse of the universe, it is the life of God, it is the river that maketh glad the city of the blessed. Covet earnestly this best gift. Learn to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ

which passeth knowledge, *that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.*"

#### THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

"And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."—John viii. 3—11.

THOUGH Tischendorf, Thier, Alford, Tholuck, Trench, and others, reject this narrative as not genuine, and, therefore, not entitled to a place in the inspired volume, other

and more numerous critics, whose scholarship and authority are unsurpassed, maintain it is a constituent portion of sacred truth. The reasons that Webster and Wilkinson in their Greek Testament adduce in favor of its genuineness, we accept as sufficient for the purpose. The incident is in exquisite keeping with the whole Gospel history. The scribes and Pharisees here, are exactly what they appeared everywhere else; and Christ's conduct here, too, accords with the whole tenor of His life as sketched in the Gospels. Amongst the remarks it suggests, there are three worthy of special attention, and which are true, whether the narrative is inspired or not. It suggests—

I. THAT THE VILEST SINNERS ARE OFTEN THE GREATEST ACCUSERS. Who were the accusers of this adulteress? The scribes and Pharisees; and according to Christ's judgment, and according to the judgment of all who would look at actions through His system of morality, they were, of all sinners, the greatest. It is true that on this occasion their accusation of the woman was inspired by their dislike to Christ, rather than a dislike to her, or a hatred of her crime. "*They say unto him,*

Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou. *This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.*" They sought by this to entrap Him, to get Him to do or say something in the matter on which they could found a charge that would lead to His ruin. If He acquitted her, they would accuse Him of violating the law of Moses; and if He condemned her, they would accuse Him of political usurpation, for the power to condemn to death was invested entirely in Roman authority. But whether their conduct in this instance was prompted by a dislike to Christ, or a dislike to the woman, it suggests and illustrates the truth that the greatest sinners are generally the greatest accusers. The more base and corrupt a man is, the more ready he is to charge crimes on others, and the more severe he is in his censures on the conduct of his fellow-men. The more unchaste, untruthful, dishonest, a man is, the more ready to suspect the chastity, truthfulness, and probity of others. Take care of social accusers. The demon of the old Scribes and Pharisees is in them. It suggests—

II. THAT THE SEVEREST JUDGE OF SINNERS IS THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE. See how Jesus touched the consciences of these sinners. He "stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst." Observe two things. First: *Christ's method of waking up their consciences*. (1) He expresses by a symbolical act His *superiority* to their malignant purposes. They were full of unholy excitement. Evil in them was now a passion, and they were impatient for Him to commit Himself; but He is sublimely calm. He stoops down and writes on the ground as if He were utterly indifferent to their miserable aims. They must have felt this. There is often a power in holy silence, which no words, however eloquent, can carry. (2) He puts the question of the woman's punishment

upon their *own* consciences.

"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." As if He had said, "I do not defend her conduct; stone her if you like; she deserves stoning. But let her be stoned by those who are free from sin, for it is monstrous for one sinner to stone another. Are you without sin? Then stone her. If not, take care." This touched them. Another thing to be observed is—Secondly: *The force of their awakened conscience*. "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last." Conscience-smitten, they went out from the presence of Christ as if scared by His majestic purity. This conscience for a time confounded their purposes, and abashed them with their own wickedness. "One by one" they skulked away. Ah! There is no judge so severe and crushing in his sentence as that of a guilty conscience. It suggests—

III. THAT THE GREATEST FRIEND OF SINNERS IS JESUS CHRIST. The accusers are gone, but the accused is there with Jesus alone. "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman,

said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? she said, No, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." First: *He declines pronouncing a judicial condemnation upon her.* "Neither will I condemn thee." It does not mean that Christ did not approve her conduct and condemn her *morally*, but that *judicially* He declined giving sentence upon her.

He neither possessed nor claimed any jurisdiction in civil or criminal affairs. He

was not the work of the magistrate, but the magistrate's work for the magistrate to do.

He did not come to stone sinners to death, but to save sinners to life. Secondly: *He charges her with a merciful conviction.* "Go, and sin no more."

An expression implying—(1) That she had sinned. Adultery is a terrible moral crime. (2) That He forgave her her sin. "Go, and sin no more."

(3) That her future should be free from sin. "Go, and sin no more." Let bygones be bygones. Let oblivion cover thy sins, and virtue crown thy life. "Go, and sin no more." This is how Christ deals with sinners. He is the sinner's friend. Desolate, deserted, forsaken of all, He will stand by thee.

#### A SAD SIGHT.

"And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding."—Prov. vii. 7.

HERE is a sad sight. "Understanding," or reason, is the glory of human nature. It is "the candle of the Lord," to light us on our destiny. Where this is not, you have a traveller on a devious path without light; a vessel on a treacherous sea without rudder or compass. Who is the young man void of understanding? First: *He is one who pays more attention to his outward appearance than to his inner character.* He spends more time at his toilet than with books. His grand effort is not to train his faculties in knowledge and goodness, but to have a fine presence and gentlemanly deportment, to make an impression by his person. This is sad, for it is folly; it is sacrificing the jewel for the casket. Secondly: *He is one who seeks happiness without rather than within.* He looks for pleasure, not in the contemplation of elevating subjects, and in the harmonious flow of holy sympathies, but in the gratification of his sensual nature. The tavern, the saloon, the ball-room, are where he seeks his heaven. This is a sad sight. Such a young man is "void of understanding."

For all true happiness must spring from within. The well of true joy must be found in the heart, or nowhere. Thirdly: *He is one who identifies greatness with circumstances, rather than with character.* To wardrobes, office, rank, wealth, he looks for greatness, rather than to the cultivation of a noble character, by diligent study and virtuous deeds. He who acts thus is "void of understanding." True greatness is in the soul, nowhere else. Fourthly: *He is one who is guided more by the dictates of his own nature than by the counsels of experience.* He acts from the suggestions of his own immature judgment. To attend to the counsels of his seniors, his parents, and those who are farther advanced in the path of life, he proudly deems beneath his dignity. The lessons of the past are nothing to him. The Bible of experience has no verse worthy of his notice. He is his own master. He will be taught by no one, not he. He who acts thus, is "void of understanding," and acts a lamentable part. Fifthly: *He is one who lives in show and ignores realities.* He who lives in those pursuits and pleasures which are in vogue for the hour, and neglects the great realities of the soul and eternity, is "void of understanding." And how

lamentable a sight is this: the sight of a young man living and acting thus without understanding, a young man thus forming a wretched character for manhood and age—a young man the hope of the future. Solomon intimates that he only saw one of this class amongst many. In this age, alas, they abound. They crowd almost every street, appear in every circle, throng our places of public resort. Thoughtful men who love their country feel solemn at the sight.

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#### GRACE AND TRUTH.

"Full of grace and truth."—John i. 14.

THE word "grace," I take as standing for all that is genial, generous, and loving in temper; and the word "truth," as representing all that is substantial, real, and enduring in thought, habit, and life. The former is opposed to all that is cold, selfish, and malign; the latter, to all that is hollow, fictitious, and ephemeral. They are two sides, or sections, of the same thing; and that thing, *moral goodness*, the perfection of God, and the glory and happiness of His intelligent creation. Two remarks are suggested concerning this "grace and truth."

I. They are DEFICIENT in man, and this is man's ruin. First: Their deficiency is *unnatural*. Man's soul is formed for "grace and truth." These are its *native* atmosphere, no other air will suit its life; its native orbit, in no other sphere will its faculties thrive and move harmoniously. Hence the soul in their absence declines in health, is pained with remorse, and groans under a terrible sense of emptiness. Secondly: Their deficiency is *universal*. This is too astoundingly evident to require argument or illustration. *Selfishness* and *falsehood*, their moral opposites, reign supreme in all unregenerate souls. Thirdly: Their deficiency is *disastrous*. Their absence gives room for, and facilitates the growth of, every evil thought and passion. The spirit in which "grace and truth" are not cultivated, becomes like the sluggard's vineyard, overgrown with thorns, and nettles, and noxious things. It runs into a wilderness of evils. There is not a wrong institution, a corrupt system, a criminal act, that are not modifications of that *selfishness* and *falsehood* which pervade all souls that are destitute of "grace and truth." Another remark suggested concerning "grace and truth" is—

II. They are ABUNDANT in Christ, and this is man's hope. He is *full* of "grace and truth." He overflows with those very blessings which fallen men most *urgently* require. There, is an *empty* world; here, is a *full* Christ. He has sufficient "grace and truth" in Him, to fill up every graceless and untruthful soul. First: He is *full* of "grace." All that is generous, loving, compassionate, forgiving, fills Him to an overflow, and it streams from Him in every look, expression, and movement. (1) He is "full of grace," notwithstanding His *immense* provocations. Provocations soon exhaust all the kindness in our nature, or rather soon turn it to wrath. What provocations Christ received! Contemplate the treatment He met with from the men of His age; yet after human enmity had done its worst, He sends offers of mercy to His murderers at Jerusalem. (2) He is "full of grace," notwithstanding His *immense* communications. What millions has He enriched with His grace! Out of His fulness, innumerable multitudes have received *grace upon grace*; yet the fountain in Him is unexhausted, and as "full" as ever. Secondly: He is *full* of "truth." What is truth? Complete *relative* truth is conformity of life to

*absolute reality.* Truth in thought, is conformity to eternal fact; truth in life, conformity to eternal law. Christ was *full* of this "truth." His thoughts about God and His universe; man, his constitution and condition, his duty and destiny, are in exact agreement with eternal reality. His life in every part was in exquisite harmony with absolute and eternal rectitude. He was "*The Truth*." He is the only perfect teacher the world has ever had. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son *alone* hath declared him."

Brother, our duty and our interests agree, and are alike obvious. We need "grace and truth" to expel the demons of selfishness and falsehood, and there is only one being in the universe that can supply our need, and that is CHRIST. He is "*full* of grace and truth." "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of *eternal life*."

#### HUMAN REDEMPTION.

"The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." — Isaiah liii. 10.

I. HUMAN REDEMPTION IS A PLEASURE TO THE ALMIGHTY. It is the "pleasure of the Lord." It is not a mere

work of intellect, it is a work of the heart. It is "His good pleasure." It is *the highest qualification of His benevolence.* It is benevolence in restoring the rebellious to order, the sinful to holiness, the miserable to blessedness. What is most pleasing to a being always—(1) Engages most of his thoughts; and (2) Enlists most of his energies.

II. HUMAN REDEMPTION IS ENTRUSTED TO CHRIST. It shall "prosper in *his* hands." He has undertaken the work. Redemption is the *grand* work to which Christ gives himself. Four things are necessary to qualify a being to succeed in any undertaking. (1) He should enter on it from a deep sympathy with it. We persevere most in the work we most love. (2) He should foresee all the difficulties that are destined to occur. When difficulties arise which we never anticipated, we often get baffled and disheartened. (3) He should have power equal to all the emergencies of the case. (4) He should have sufficient time for its accomplishment. Death often prevents us from finishing our work. Christ has all these qualifications.

III. HUMAN REDEMPTION IS DESTINED TO SUCCEED. It "shall prosper." The two

adding remarks supply  
ment for the *certainly*  
accomplishment. (1)  
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be perplexed by the  
tions of Providence.  
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shall prosper," there-  
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ork you cannot labor

#### ISSUES OF LIFE.

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also reap. For he that  
his flesh shall of the  
corruption; but he that  
the Spirit shall of the  
p life everlasting."—  
8.

are in the presence  
at principle : *actions*  
*develop corresponding re-*  
Man cannot alter,  
: evade this law ; he  
its sweep, subject  
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REAPING WITHOUT  
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a human character.  
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Holy Ghost, are his own and  
not God's. The bad man's  
actions are his own and not  
the devil's. Every thought,  
word, action, has in it the  
energy of immortality. Men  
scatter them, and vainly  
dream that they will see  
them no more ; but they will  
return. All the life of the  
sinner will roll in upon him,  
and become the burden which  
he must ever bear ; the life  
of the Christian will return  
to Him with joy, and not with  
grief. The harvest will cor-  
respond with the sowing—  
First : *In kind*. "I have  
seen," says Eliphaz, "they  
that plow iniquity, and sow  
wickedness, reap the same."  
(Job iv. 8.) Secondly : *In*  
*measure*. "He that soweth  
sparingly, shall reap also  
sparingly." "These (the hypo-  
crites) shall receive greater  
damnation."

II. NO SOWING WITHOUT  
CHOOSING. The husbandman  
takes into account the seed,  
the soil, the season, and the  
probable demand. He makes  
up his mind, and sows. The  
range of his choice may be  
limited, the value of his de-  
cision may be comparatively  
unimportant ; but not so  
here. A man by his follies  
and crimes can increase the  
disturbing powers of darkness  
on earth and in hell ; and by  
his manly behaviour, the



Christian can send a thrill of delight through the entire hosts of heaven, well-pleasing to God. Earth is the choosing ground, time the choosing period. Pass the boundary, and there is the "great gulf fixed." Now, man may think, ponder, calculate, weigh, and choose; then, "he that is unjust," &c.

III. NO CHOOSING WITHOUT A DIFFERENCE. Choosing, is taking sides. If I pass to the left, I leave the right; for no man can serve two masters. In religious husbandry, alas! the hoe, the rake, the top-dressing of opinion and prejudice, suffice for many; while the sub-soil plough of principle is used by too few. Sect may come nearer sect, because they are separated only by pride or prejudice; but Christ cannot come nearer Satan, because they are separated by everlasting principles. Time binds up many a wound with his balmy fingers; but *these* can never be bound together. Let the true preacher, then, like Moses, set before the people

"life and death, blessing and cursing." Like Elijah, let him boldly challenge, "If the LORD be God, follow him; but if *Baal*, then follow him."

IV. NO DIFFERENCE WITHOUT A SAVIOUR. "Who maketh thee to differ from another." Oh, Christian! who came to thee in the prison of thy lusts, and opened the door! Who threw light upon thy path, and showed thee thy danger? Who tracked thy steps when a fugitive, and brought thee back? Who pitched thy aims so high! Who gave thee motives so pure and so powerful! principles of character so radical and lasting? hopes so bright and unblushing? I know thy ready answer. CHRIST!

"His love's a refuge ever nigh;  
His watchfulness a mountain high;  
His name's a rock, which winds above  
And waves below can never move.

"His covenant for ever sure,  
For endless ages will endure;  
His perfect work will ever prove  
The depth of His unchanging love.

"While all things change, He changes  
not;  
He ne'er forgets, though oft forgot;  
His love unchangeably the same,  
And as enduring as His name."

H. T. M.

Liverpool.

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### SOCIALISM OF THE UNIVERSE.

The social principle is the soul of the material universe. You cannot go into the meadows, and pluck up a single daisy by the roots without breaking up a society of nice relations, and detecting a principle which sustains the same relation to gravitation, as the nervous system does to the veins and arteries of the human body. The handful of earth that follows the tiny roots of the little flower, is replete with social elements. A little social circle had been formed around that germinating daisy. The sunbeam and the dewdrop met there, and the soft summer breeze came whispering through the tall grass to join the silent concert, and the earths took them to their bosom, and introduced them to that daisy germ, and they all went to work to shew that flower to the sun. Each mingled in the honey of its influence, and they nursed the "wee canny thing" with an aliment that made it grow, and when it lifted its eyes towards the sky, they wove a soft carpet of grass for its feet. And the sun saw it through the green leaves, and smiled as he passed on, and then by star-light, and by moon-light, they worked on, and the daisy lifted up its head, and one morning while the sun was looking upon the dews it put on its silver rimmed diadem, and shewed its yellow petals to the stars. And it nodded to the little birds that were swimming in the sky, and all of them that had silver-lined wings came, and the birds in black, and gray, and quaker brown came, and the querulous blue bird, and the curtesying yellow bird came and each sung a native air at the coronation of that

daisy. Every thing that sung or shone upon that "wee modest flower," was a member of that social circle, and conspired to its harmony and added to its music, Heaven, earth, sky and sea were its companions; the sun and stars walked hand in hand with it, as kindly as if they never saw another daisy, or had another companion. The sober ocean, even the distant Pacific, laded the fleet-winged clouds with sweet-savoured dews to brighten its countenance when the sun appeared. Such was the social circle which you broke up, when you put forth your hand to pluck "the little canny thing amang the stour."

Now all the members of this social circle were necessary to the well-being of that daisy. It needed the sun-beam, the dewdrop, and rain-drop, and the soft summer breeze to develop its character and unfold its beauties—it needed the morning song of the birds and the chirping lay of the meadow's stream to keep time by, as it waved its silver diadem to the twittering swallow's wing.

If, then, my young friends, our Heavenly Father has provided such companions, and social influences for the lily or the daisy, what provision has He not made for the society of His children.

Whatever may be your destiny in this world or that to come, you never will be left alone. . . . Remember that you are not now *only* forming a character, but choosing companions for eternity.

You must be the centre of a little solar system, in which your companions, like the sun-illuminated planets, shall move in the reflection of your light. — *Extract from "Sparks from the Anvil,"* by ELLEN BURRITT.

## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL : A Homiletic Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew. By DAVID THOMAS, D.D., Minister of Stockwell Chapel, London, Editor of the "Homilist," Compiler of the "Biblical Liturgy," &c., &c. Edited by REV. WILLIAM WEBSTER, M.A., late Fellow of Queen's College, Joint-Editor of "Webster and Wilkinson's Greek Testament," &c. London : Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

THE author in his preface says, "My belief is, that the best method for chasing away the clouds of scepticism that hang over the Book of God is, not to employ our powers in describing and denouncing them, but to bring forth—by an honest interpretation and philosophic analysis—the Divine beams of light that lie in the sacred text. It is not our little logic or learning, but God's own light, that must sweep the soul's firmament of its clouds of erroneous thought. This work is made up, for the most part, of the substance of discourses, first spoken from the pulpit, and afterwards published in the 'Homilist' from month to month, extending over a period of well-nigh fourteen years. This will account for, and, I hope, justify, the popular mould in which they are cast, their freedom from philological criticism, and the degrees of merit by which they are distinguished. They are full or sketchy, discursive or condensed, according to the time at my disposal when I wrote; elaborate or analytic, vivacious or otherwise, according to my mood at the hour in which the thoughts took their rise, shaped their form, and gave their expression. To have given the work a greater show of learning by a free use of Greek type, verbal criticisms, quotations from the Fathers, and references to the rare thinkers of olden times and the ripest scholars of my own age, would have been easy; but this, whilst it might have given the glitter of scholarship to my efforts, would, at the same time, have added to the work—already too bulky—a weight to sink it into the ever-widening grave of verbose productions."

The Editor, Mr. Webster, finds three striking features in the discourses,

upon which he makes a few remarks, viz., *Reality, Common Sense, Fidelity*. He says, "There is a reality in this volume equally remote from that sacramentalism, and that sentimentalism, which have nothing in common save their want of reality, and their blighting influence on pure and undefiled religion. We may say of the author, *Nil falsi audet, nil veri non audet dicere*. On every topic he says neither more nor less than what he feels. Much of the preaching of the present day is ineffectual because it is unreal. The preacher represents the hopes and fears of a Christian, the joys and sorrows of religion, not in language drawn from his own experience or his own convictions, but in terms which he has borrowed from other men. That which was perfectly just, natural, and real, when originally indited, is strange, simulated, and unnatural, when retailed. Nothing of this kind can be found in this volume. The author speaks only what he knows, and testifies that only of which he is assured.

"Another feature in these discourses is, the good *common sense* which they evince in a remarkable freedom from the morbid dread of legality. Many of those who are attached to the doctrines of grace—and I can hardly think it possible for a man to be really a minister of Christ Jesus, who is not so attached—betray such a jealousy for evangelical teaching, that they pay small attention to what is practical. They consider spirituality to rise so far above morality, that they throw into the shade the didactic and preceptive teaching of Scripture. He who would make full proof of his ministry must make up his mind to be accounted a moralist and a legalist. It has recently been said that there are in every congregation four classes who need special admonitions, which they do not receive—the dishonest, the unclean, the covetous, the assenters—those who hang about the doors of the ark, but who never enter in. It is nearly forty years ago since Isaac Taylor, in his 'Natural History of Euthusiasm,' called attention to those who lived on better terms with angels and seraphs than with their children, servants, and neighbours. How are we to account for this state of things? My answer is, a morbid dread of legality, and a mistaken jealousy for the doctrines of grace.

"A third feature in these discourses is, their *fidelity*—the high-souled indifference to human censure or human applause. We may trace in the writer the features of an Ezekiel—"Thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear;" or the lineaments of an Isaiah—"Cry out, spare not; shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sin." Many popular preachers see no iniquity in those to whom they minister; they discern no transgression in the people of their charge. How miserable the minister who purchases popularity by dwelling on the faults of the absent, by delivering eloquent harangues against all the errors and heresies which can be found in Christendom, while he deals tenderly

with the faults of his hearers, and treats slightly the sore of his own congregation!

"In reading over these discourses as they passed through the press, there are many passages upon which I paused with the view of drawing attention to their peculiar merits. These became so numerous, that I altogether forbear, lest I should extend this introduction to an inconvenient length. I shall heartily rejoice if this volume finds its way into the hands of those who usually restrict their readings to writers of their own branch of the Church Universal, believing that its perusal will assist the growth of truth and peace. I can heartily recommend it to all my clerical brethren who would adapt their preaching to meet the errors of the present day; to all, whether ministers or laymen, who wish to add to their store of knowledge. May they go forward in their toil, giving similar proof with the author, that they are 'workmen who need not be ashamed; speaking out with all boldness, under the guidance of the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.'"

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A FULL REVIEW AND EXPOSURE OF BISHOP COLENSO'S PROFANE FICTIONS AND FALLACIES, IN PART II. OF HIS WORK. By HON. JUDGE MARSHALL, of Nova Scotia. London: Wm. Freeman.

It is well known that Bishop Colenso's attack on the received notions on the early books of the Old Testament, has called forth a host of answers. Amongst these the present work holds a respectable place. Yet we are far from agreeing with all that is advanced, or sympathizing with his apparently extreme aversion to criticism and the disturbance of old opinions. Doubtless much that the Bishop has written is characterized by rashness and some of it even profaneness. Yet that should not induce us to reject the well-considered conclusions of modern scholarship. It would be an evil result indeed of the controversy if it made us afraid of free investigation, or identified orthodoxy with obstinacy. Thirty years ago, before Colenso was heard of, some of his opinions were held by certain of the soundest Churchmen and the most learned Dissenters, and were openly expounded in organs whose reputation was unquestioned. It was then not considered a heresy to believe that the earlier part of Genesis was edited, rather than written, by Moses, that there were two accounts of the creation, and that Elohim or God was used for the Deity in the one and Jehovah in the other. It were much to be wished that an end could be put for the present to all this Colenso literature, in trust that ere long a man would appear, thoroughly qualified by profound learning, comprehensive thought and sober piety, for the task of discriminating what is good from what is evil in the statements and spirit of the African Bishop, and setting the whole question in the light of truth.

**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF STEPHEN CHARNOCK, B.D.** With Introduction by REV. JAMES M'COSH, LL.D. Vol. I. Containing Discourses on Divine Things, and the Existence and Attributes of God. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

THIS is one of the volumes of Nichol's *Series of Standard Divines*, others of which have been often noticed in our pages. Stephen Charnock studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and as might be expected, turned out a Puritan. He settled at Dublin, but was ejected by the Act of Uniformity. The Treatise on the Attributes, contained in the present volume, is his principal work, and though disfigured by the usual faults of the age and the school of Charnock, has considerable merits. Dr. M'Cosh has done his best with very scanty materials for a memoir. He has also prefixed two masterly Essays on Puritan Preaching, and on the Philosophical Principles involved in the Puritan Theology.

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**SACRED SCENES; or, NOTES OF TRAVEL IN EGYPT AND THE HOLY LAND.** By REV. F. FERGUSON, M.A. Glasgow: Thomas Adamson.

THERE is very much in this book which will interest the multitude. It of course contains descriptions of the scenes of chief importance; and these are interspersed with a great variety of detail of personal adventure, not only in the countries mentioned in the title, but also on the route. As there are so many works on these "Sacred Scenes," it is no mean praise to say that the author has done well to increase the number.

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**GOD'S WAY OF HOLINESS.** By HORATIUS BONAR, D.D. London: James Nisbet & Co.

THIS is not a logical or a critical treatise, but is intended to be purely practical. It is inevitable that a book of this nature should contain much that is good and true. Yet as Christian life is based on Christian doctrine, we think the author would have succeeded better if he had thoroughly mastered the Scriptural doctrine of holiness before beginning to write about it.

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**THE NOVELTIES OF ROMANISM.** By CHARLES COLLETTE. London: Religious Tract Society.

THIS work consists of three parts:—Development of Doctrine; Chronological Arrangement; Old and New Creeds Contrasted. In the first the author furnishes a few plain proofs of the novelties of modern Romanism. The second he traces through successive centuries the

development of Papal error, and priestly assumption. And in the third he presents the contrast between the simple Scriptural creed of the primitive Church, and that of Romanism, as it is consolidated in the Council of Trent. The work is a valuable one on the subject which he treats.

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JOHN CALVIN. A Tercentenary Memorial. By ALEXANDER THOMSON, M.A., of Manchester. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

THIS is a well-written tractate, containing, however, we think, a very exaggerated estimate of the merits of John Calvin. For our own part, we wish that Calvin had never written on "Theology," and that he had displayed a more Christ-like spirit.

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VITAL QUESTIONS. By REV. FREDERICK FOX THOMAS, Torquay. Second Edition. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co. We are glad to find that this valuable little work has reached a "second edition." We hope we shall soon have to record a third. THE BOOK OF PRAYER FOR THE HOUSE OF PRAYER. London: Wertheim, Macintosh, & Hunt. A little book, on a good subject, written in a narrow spirit. A BOOK FOR WIVES AND MOTHERS. London: Wertheim, Macintosh, & Hunt. Interesting and useful. THE FIRST STEP OF A CLOSER WALK WITH GOD. By CHARLES BOGATSKY. London: Wertheim, Macintosh, & Hunt. Devout but weak. SIN AND SUFFERING RECONCILABLE WITH DIVINE BENEVOLENCE. Four Discourses. By JOSHUA PRIESTLEY. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co. The title describes this book, which abounds with noble thoughts from the pen of an able and well-known writer. AN APOLOGY FOR THE ADOPTION OF PÆDOBAPTISM. With an Appendix concerning the Possibility of Union between the Congregational and Baptist Denominations. By REV. J. R. S. HARRINGTON, late of the Bristol Baptist College. London: John Snow. Mr. Harrington is a logical thinker, and a diligent and reverent student of Scripture. His Apology is, as far as it goes, a good example of arguing. With the Appendix, we have no concern. PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY. A Discourse addressed to the Ministers and Messengers of the Yorkshire Association of Baptist Churches, met in Portmahon Chapel, Sheffield, May 18th, 1864. By REV. ROBERT HOLMES, Baptist Minister, Rawden. Published by Request. Bradford: H. B. Byles. We see in this pamphlet an honest man and an able thinker struggling against the influence of his system. May he succeed in finding a complete deliverance! TRACTARIAN ERRORS: A Word of Warning. By REV. JOSIAH MILLER, M.A. Second Edition. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. This pamphlet has reached a second edition, and therefore requires neither characterisation nor commendation. May the errors he has exposed speedily depart!



# A HOMILY

ON

## The Dignity of Man.

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"Ye are of more value than many sparrows."—Matt. x. 31.

**I**T was a common practice of our Blessed Lord, when enforcing His lessons of truth and wisdom, to refer for illustration to the works of nature, and God's providential dealings with the creatures of His hand. Were His hearers doubtful as to the supplies of food for the replenishment of their daily wants? They were referred to *Him*, who—although they were accounted *unclean* in the statutes of the ceremonial law—feedeth the ravens that sow not, nor gather into barns. Were they anxious about obtaining a sufficiency of clothing? He directed their attention to the clothing of the earth, to the beauties of its flowers, to the raiment of the lily of the valley surpassing the kingly robes of Solomon in all his grandeur. Are their souls mistrustful of Providence? Do they look forth with more than proper care towards the future, overweeningly anxious about some cloud of trouble which lowers threateningly in the distant horizon? He asks them, in the words immediately preceding our text, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." "Cares God," it may be asked, "for sparrows?" Yes! the universe around us, in all its living *wonderfulness*, corroborates these intimations of the *LIVING*



WORD, and makes it manifest that He who was the *personal* manifestation of Deity on earth, only directed our attention to a truth which His works—those other revelations of Himself—will constantly substantiate. His all-seeing eye is neither baffled by gigantic vastness, nor by infinitesimal minuteness. The number of our hairs elude not His searching ken. Nay! creatures a thousand times smaller than the thickness of our hairs were called into existence by His fiat, and are fed, and nurtured, and sustained by His providential care. A single drop of the water of our ditches, which has been exposed to the vivifying sunbeams, will often, when examined with a microscope, show us thousands, yea, tens of thousands of creatures, revelling as in an ocean of their own. Each sparkling drop is, as it were, animated with life and enjoyment. Countless millions of creatures which our eyes cannot see, escape not the all-peering vision of the All-seeing One, who caters for their wants, and provides for their necessities. The bloom upon our plums and peaches is composed of living, breathing creatures, too small for our unaided eyes to see their movements, or discern their lineaments. The leaves upon our trees are tenanted and animated. The very refuse which we cast away in disgust, is soon filled to overflowing with varied forms of being and enjoyment. And God careth for these! Not one of them can open or close its brief existence without the exercise of His power! Careth He not, then, for sparrows?

The whole universe is one vast scene of need and of supply, of craving and enjoyment. Visible nature is in every way adapted to the creatures that dwell upon its surface, and they are equally adapted to visible nature. The *wisdom* of the All-benevolent has imparted *wants*, that His bounties might be enjoyed; and the *hand* of the All-benevolent has in all cases supplied those wants. Every creature, too, is adapted to the existence of all others, so that there is no hiatus in the chain of life, no gap to be filled up; while every creature is *as* adapted and suited to its own peculiar sphere of being and enjoyment, as though in its existence all the Divine purposes

were fully answered and compassed, as though the stable earth, the yielding air, and the sustaining flood, were created for *its* use and pleasure alone. Thus God careth for *all*. Careth He not, then, for sparrows?

But "ye are of more value than many sparrows." The all-sustaining, all-directing hand, that—

"Ever busy, wheels the silent spheres;  
Works in the secret deep; shoots steaming, thence,  
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the fields;  
And guides the wheels of nature in their course"—

Has provided in a peculiar manner for you. He has given you not only greater capacities for enjoyment, but also the means of answering those capacities, and fulfilling every proper and right desire—instincts and affections craving for external objects, and external objects on which they may lavish themselves, and not in vain. All the great purposes of life are answered by the implanting and gratification of impulses, so that in seeking his own enjoyment—under proper moral control—man is doing the will, and fulfilling the purposes of God.

Nor is this the only respect in which—as evidenced by our original condition as creatures—we "are of more value than many sparrows." Our enjoyments are not only greater, they are also more varied. Besides those animal appetites and impulsive propensities which he shares in common with other creatures, man has other endowments—gifts of overflowing wisdom and benevolence. He has intellectual capacities—æsthetic sentiments, delighting in the beautiful—and moral powers, distinguishing between right and wrong, and delighting, *for its own sake*, in that which is good and virtuous. With the grasp of his mighty intellect he surveys his own world, and others which lie beyond it in the outspread regions of infinitude. He examines the laws of nature, and gratifies his mind with a thousand discoveries of the fitness of things. The objective and the subjective, the outward universe and the inward desire and longing are so exactly *adapted to each other*. He has irrepressible desires for

calculation, and objects innumerable on which to exercise, in the way of distance, size, and number, those arithmetical propensities. He has a love of generalization and comparison, and objects without number on which he can exercise those faculties, arranging, classing, dividing, and sub-dividing to his heart's content, until what once appeared mere multitudinous profusion, becomes under his power of arrangement (as it ever was in the view of the Creator) a continuous chain of organisms, in which each animal and vegetable creature is not only a distinct, but an orderly and necessary link. He has an innate desire of investigating cause and effect, and an outward universe, governed by unfailing and salutary laws, whose sequences are constant and almost unvarying, in which cause and effect may ever, with advantage, be seen and studied. He has an innate love of the beautiful, and everything around him to gratify those feelings. The varied forms of nature, the blending of colors, the harmonies of sound, all contribute to form for him inexhaustible sources of delight. Hill and valley, plain and woodland, mountain and ravine, the roaring cataract, the swelling sea, the gently-flowing river, all contribute to his gratification and pleasure. The starry heavens—

“That alphabet of immensity  
By which we read, in dazzling light,  
The lofty name of the Infinite”—

The flowers of earth, that, starlike seem almost reflections of their beams, these and a thousand other things, all are calculated to exercise that faculty in a measure inexhaustible, and to improve and soften, as well as gratify, the mind that gives full play to its exercise; and, above all, the mutual adaptation between the mind and the outward universe in which it is placed, indisputably shows that in the regards of Omniscience and Omnipotence, which has exercised such care over our mental constitution, *we “are of more value than many sparrows.”*

But man's moral powers distinguish him, above all these, from the inferior and instinctive tribes. His soul, which

once, as an unbroken mirror, reflected back the image of his God in which he was created, even now, though broken and shattered by the fall, catches, in its scattered but brilliant fragments, some portions of that image, and reflects them in unsullied beauty. We have an innate love of justice, truth, and goodness, although we are so corrupted by our lapse from original rectitude, that we seldom pursue them with unwavering and unvarying steps. The eyes even of the wicked and debased will fill with tears at a narrative of the sufferings of self-devoted and disinterested love. We admire truth when we do not practise it. We value justice in the abstract when our own dealings are unjust. We set up a standard of virtue, and profess to regard it almost with worship, while we dally with vice and wantonness, and offer *them* the first-fruits of our gains and toil. And does not the possession of these powers, though they are so little exercised—powers which no other creatures *do* possess—still further show that in the regards of our Creator, we “*are of more value than many sparrows?*”

And yet there is one other characteristic in which man differs still more from the irrational and instinctive creature—that liberty of choice and liberty of action which makes him more *like* God, and at the same time responsible to God.

The sparrow has no power of choice, but in all its doings acts in accordance with an irresistible impression, conveyed, most probably, through the medium of the brain. It builds its nest, indeed, in accordance with the strictest forms of architectural beauty, and with a skill which may well be regarded as perfection. It builds it, too, with every apparent regard to utility and adaptation, so exactly suited is it to the purposes for which it is intended. Yet it has no power of choice. It could not do otherwise. The skill and the knowledge exhibited are not its own; for every sparrow of the same species, though it has had no opportunity of instruction from its parents, since the home of its infancy was built before the egg, from which it proceeded, was laid, builds in *exactly the same manner*, and there has been no alteration or

improvement since its first parents came originally from the hand of their Creator.

The sparrow *seems*, also, to possess a knowledge of the principles of physiology in the selection of its food and medicine, for here, too, it always takes the right; and even when man attempts deception will often reject that which it usually feeds upon because it is poisoned. But here, too, it has no choice. It could not do otherwise. The wisdom it exhibits is not its own, for it is not the result of experience; nor are its conclusions arrived at by any reasoning process. The knowledge is *implanted*. It was received direct from Him without whose permissive will none of them could fall to the ground.

Man's acts are *not* thus the result of indefinable impression. They are the result of choice, guided by the carnal, mental, or spiritual appetite, and controlled by the exercise of reason. He does not know by intuitive or irresistible impression what is his proper food or medicine. He has to gain that knowledge from experiment and experience, and often by bitter and even fatal experience he *does* attain it. But he has a power of *recording*, and thus of storing facts and experiences; and thus by the exercise of the rational faculty, his liberty of choice is guided. Impressed, perhaps, to some extent, instinctively, or else *more* directly taught by God the necessity of providing himself with shelter and protection, he has ever made himself *some* description of clothing and dwelling-place; but with his liberty of choice and capacity of improvement he has changed the skins of wild beasts, or the sewn and interwoven leaves of trees into apparel neat, elegant, or sumptuous, and exchanged the simple tent, and the rude hut or wigwam, for the elegant dwelling or the gorgeous palace, in which every style of architectural beauty feasts the eye and gratifies the mind. Truly, then, "*Ye are of more value than many sparrows.*"

But, alas! there is another side of this picture. There is something else involved in this faculty of choosing between right and wrong. Truly man can look forth as a god, upon the universe; mould matter to his will; form out of inert or

unresisting materials, tools and appliances to accomplish his purposes and designs ; and, as he sees all *other* things controlled by unchanging laws or guided by irresistible impulses, can exclaim, with something approaching the freedom of a Deity, (*created* in the glorious image of his God), "I have the power of *choice*, and am not bound up in the necessities of nature." Yet that power is an awful as well as a glorious one. While he was contented to know *only good*, all things worked well ; but when our first parents, under the temptation of Satan, aspired to be more essentially as Gods, to know *good and evil*, how was the scene changed ! Alas, the sparrow never rebels against the laws of its being ; it never resists the guiding impressions of its creator. There is no jarring, no deviation from right, no rebellion against nature's laws in any of its actions. But man, gifted with the liberty of choice, has *chosen* to do evil, though warned that its consequences would be fatal ; has *chosen* to rebel against the Fountain Source of liberty from whom his own freedom was derived ; has *chosen* recklessly to break the essentially righteous laws of that God, who gave him life and all that constitutes life a blessing. The abuse of liberty has proved his ruin. The image of God, broken, defaced, trampled in the dust, smeared over with the foul slime of sin, seems rather like the image of the wicked one. Many debased, degraded, and polluted, seek their enjoyment only in iniquity. Others of a higher character seek their enjoyment in pleasures more refined, or in amassing wealth or pursuing the vain dreams of ambition : but alike with the former class are regardless of God or give Him but the refuse of their time. And if there be some who profess to worship Him and honor Him, what is *their* return to Him compared with what is required by the great moral law of creation, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ?" Alas, the broken bits of service that the best of us can offer Him are nothing in comparison with what that law requires. And can it still be said of such ungrateful and rebellious creatures as we are—" *Ye are of more value than many sparrows ?* "

*Let God's doings declare the estimate He forms of that*

value. In the lowest depth of man's abasement the cry was heard in heaven—"Save them from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom." He *bore*, from the first, with their iniquities and ingratitude, and loaded them in return with the daily blessings of His providence. He *promised*, as soon as they had fallen from righteousness, that a means of restoration should be provided. He *taught*, in plain verbal terms, and also, in order that a deeper and more lasting impression might be made, He taught by means of ceremonial rites and observances, the great truths of their innate impurity, and the necessity of cleansing and restoration, to fit them for a more exalted state of being. He *exhorted*, by means of His teachers and prophets, His lapsed creatures to return from the ways of evil to the path of rectitude, to repent of and forsake their sins, and turn unto Him with full purpose of heart, that consistently with the immutable laws of morality, He might have mercy upon them. And when all this failed, He *gave* the most precious gift which the whole universe could furnish, as a ransom for the creature who had thus wandered from His love. Who shall declare the unutterable fulness of that love which quenched the light of the empyrean for the redemption of the lost? A God, a present God, has stooped to make the sin-stained earth His dwelling-place, that His pure footsteps might efface the stains. The Creator has stooped to the limits of creatureship. The unfathomable ocean of eternity is poured into the narrow channel of time. The Source of all the happiness and enjoyment in the universe drops tears of agony over human woe; yea, bathes man's dwelling-place with His bloody tears and bloody perspirations. Purity unites itself to corruption, life marries itself with death, that death and corruption alike might be destroyed.

"Oh Love Divine!

O, miracle of Love! O, Love of God!  
Had universal nature backward slunk  
Into the barren womb of nothingness,  
Had light turned darkness, matter chaos wild,  
And order rank confusion, it were nought  
To that stupendous scene where God in flesh  
Died for the creature's sin."

That, believing in the love thus exhibited, that creature might be drawn back to the righteousness he had forsaken, and be led to *choose* the good and refuse the evil. Truly, then, in God's estimate, my brethren, "*Ye are of more value than many sparrows.*"

Needs the truth yet further illustration by way of full enforcement? Take it from man's immortal destiny. Look over that yawning precipice into the dark and terrible abyss beneath. There, the blackness of darkness reigns—a darkness that truly may be felt; but there ascends up from its deep, bottomless gulfs, a smell of brimstone and of fire. Listen! there is a sound of wailing and of wretchedness; yea, of weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. These are the regions of unutterable despair, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." And ever and anon, amid the cries of pain and groans of torture, there fall upon the ear the echoes of a word, pronounced in tones that seem like a quintessence wrung from the very dregs of agony—"For Ever."

Leave now that fearful scene, and gaze upward through the irradiated sky. Pass in imagination through the pearly gates into the golden city of the New Jerusalem. There, all is joy unclouded, happiness undimmed, felicity unchanging. There, in contemplation of the glorious works and providence of God, the children of the resurrection find a bliss unceasing. His presence is their light, His Spirit their immutable sustainer, His wisdom and His love the theme of their continual and ecstatic songs; and if there be one thought embodied into words which adds a joy to their joy, a light to their light, a glory to their glory, it is *that same thought* which wrings from despairing eyes the scalding tear-drops of the damned—the thought that they have attained an unchanging condition which will last "*for ever.*" What is the value of a soul so gifted?

Brethren, the power of *choice*, the highest creature-gift a Godhead could bestow, is *yours*. But your *destiny* is *immortality*. Over *that* you have no choice. You *must* exist for



ever, and one of these two conditions must be that of each of you hereafter. Oh ! wake then, I beseech you, to your responsibility in the exercise of this glorious—but awful—gift of liberty of action, as now—once more—I call to your attention the words of Him who spake as never other man spake—“*Ye are of more value than many sparrows.*”

REV. THOMAS RAGG, M.A., *Author of “Creation’s Testimony to its God.”*

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its WIDEST truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION FOURTEENTH.—Acts v. 17—32.

“Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors : but when we had opened, we found no man within. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. Then came one and told

men, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the centurions, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. For God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."—Acts v. 17—32.

SUBJECT :—*The Activity and Bafflement of Persecutors.*

THE subject of our last section was the "Phases of the Young Church." We looked upon it as the organ of propagative power, and as an institution differently affecting different men. In some it produced a revulsion, in some it awakened admiration, and in some it effected conversion. In various effects the Church in all ages has produced. It has never been uniform in its influence upon external society. It is a characteristic of moral forces, that their results are seldom uniform. The verses now under notice, lead us to consider *the arrest and imprisonment of the apostles, their deliverance and commission, and their arraignment and sentence.*

II. THEIR ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT. "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the chief of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." This new attack upon the Church, the language implies, was not only preceded, but occasioned by the things recorded in verses 12—16. It was not only after the disciples were so multiplied and the people so impressed by the miracles, but for that very reason, that this new persecution arose. *The apostles' success fanned into furious flame the*

indignation of their persecutors. Our success always makes the hell of envy burn hotter in the breast of our enemies. The "high priest" is particularly mentioned as the leader of this new assault, and the Sadducees are mentioned as following. The words do not teach that the "high priest" was a Sadducee, but that the Sadducees sympathized and moved with him in this attack. The Sadducees were one with Annas and Caiaphas, who were Pharisees, in their antagonism to the new religion. Two things are to be observed—

First: *The feeling of the persecutors.* What was the feeling that moved them to this attack? "Indignation." High Priest and Sadducees and all were filled with this. The Greek word does not necessarily mean a malignant passion but a strong affection either of love or anger. Here, of course, it means the latter feeling; it is malignity. The success of Peter and his associates inflamed with indignation all the factions in the great council of the nation, all hearts throbbed with the same passion, and answered to the same persecuting call. The other thing to be observed here, is—

Secondly: *The conduct of the persecutors.* They "laid their hands on the apostles." That is, they caused them to be arrested. Not only Peter and John, but most probably the twelve. They were stopped in their work, and taken into custody, and they were put in the "common prison." The word *common*, means nothing more than *public*, and does not necessarily convey the idea of degradation; still, a public prison is of all social scenes the most revolting and disreputable. Into this hideous and degrading cell, where the worst of characters were incarcerated, these twelve Apostles were confined. Thus, as ever, bigotry shows the weakness of its opinions, and the malignity of its aims, by substituting force for argument, might for right.

The words lead us to consider—

## II. THEIR DELIVERANCE AND COMMISSION.

First: *Their deliverance.* "But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth."

On a former occasion they were delivered from prison (chap iv. 21) by the timid and apprehensive policy of their oppressors. Here, they are delivered by a direct messenger from heaven. An "angel of the Lord." The definite article before "angel," is not in the original. All that is expressed, therefore, is that some angel or messenger from heaven came in the stillness of the night and liberated these apostles of the new faith. Prison walls, iron gates, and massive chains, are nothing to the touch of an angel. This miraculous rescue was adapted to rebuke their persecutors, and to rouse amongst the people the strongest emotions of reverence and of wonder. Observe—

Secondly : *Their commission.* The angel who miraculously wrought their deliverance, gave them this commission :— "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Observe—(1) The *subject* of this commission. "The words of this life." A summary and sublime description this, of the whole Gospel—"The words of this life." The Gospel is a record of words that generate, nurture, develop, and perfect, the true life of humanity. (2) The *scene* of this commission. "In the temple." "Go, stand and speak in the temple." Go to the place where the people assemble in largest concourse, the most public of all public places, and where old prejudice will rouse the strongest opposition, and there stand and speak "all the words of this life." The commission is to preach not a partial, but a whole Gospel—not a few words, but "*all* ;" and not to any particular class of men, but to the whole body of the people assembled in the most public place. (3) The *execution* of the commission. "And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught." They were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. They "conferred not with flesh and blood," but set themselves at once to work out the angelic behest, "*early in the morning.*" As the first grey beams of the opening day fell on Moriah's brow, and as the people began to assemble, they were there to meet *them.* The commission they received in the night, when the

angel brought them forth, led them to watch the first dawn of the morning with new interest, in order to fulfil the heavenly injunction. They were delivered from prison for this purpose. They were not brought forth from the cell in order that they might retire to solitude or to rest, but that they might preach the Gospel.

Now, we find, that the *deliverance* and the *commission* of these apostles had a three-fold effect upon their enemies—*confounded them with disappointment, startled them with surprise, and filled them with apprehension.* (1) *It confounded them with disappointment.* “But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, the prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.” Here was the disappointment of the whole Sanhedrim. The previous night they had committed the apostles, as they supposed, to safe custody, intending to have them arraigned in their presence, in order to make out such a charge as would legally terminate their ministry. The plans of this august assembly were formed, and their dread determinations, perhaps, fixed. The morning comes. They meet, in all the ceremony of office. The first thing they do is to despatch officers to the prison in order to conduct the culprits to their bar. They wait. The officers return; but they have no prisoners in their charge. And here is the message delivered to the council:—“The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.” What miserable victims of disappointment these magnates must have felt themselves! What a dark and chilling shadow was thrown upon the dignity of their state, and the pomp of their office! The wicked work in the dark, and Providence makes them the victims of their own plots. Another effect of the

deliverance and commission of the apostles was—(2) *That it startled their enemies with surprise.* Whilst the Sanhedrim were confounded with disappointment, the subordinate officers must have been terribly surprised when they went to the prison, found the door “shut with all safety,” saw “the keepers standing without before the doors,” all things indicating that the prisoners were safe within, but when they entered the dreary precincts there was not a man to be found. The angel had done no injury to the building, no violence to the gaolers. The whole appeared just as it had done on the previous night. Another effect of the deliverance and commission of the apostles upon their enemies was—(3) *They were filled with apprehension.* “Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.” The council was thrown into the utmost perplexity. “They were,” says Dr. Alexander, “wholly at a loss, and knew not what to think of, or what to expect from them.” The words do not so much express their wonder at what had happened, as their fear at what would be the issue of the whole—the terrible bearing upon themselves. And well might they fear. Their authority was disregarded. Heaven had thwarted their plans by a miracle. The new religion was rapidly advancing, and their efforts to stem the advancing tide were utterly abortive.

The passage leads us to consider—

### III. THEIR ARRAIGNMENT AND DEFENCE.

First: *Their arraignment.* Intelligence comes to the Sanhedrim as to where the apostles were, and as to what they were doing. “Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.” This intelligence would heighten the apprehensions of the council. It was alarming that they should have been delivered from the prison, but still more alarming that they should be found at the work of *preaching again.* Upon this information, “the captain with

the officers," went forth at once "and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned." Such was the popular regard for the apostles that the men sent to arrest them were afraid, not merely of bodily injury but of being denounced as untrue to the theocracy of the law of Moses—they are now before the Sanhedrim, and the high priest, the president of the court, addresses them in these words, "Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." This language is most significant. It expresses—(1) Their mortification at their disregarded authority, "Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name." They had so commanded them in the strongest and most unequivocal terms. (Acts iv. 17—21.) But the apostles, with a sublime heroism, set their mandates at defiance. This must have wounded their official pride, and filled them with chagrin and vexation. The language expresses—(2) An assumed contempt for the founder of the new faith. They do not mention any of the distinguishing titles of the Messiah. They only say "*this name*"—"this man's blood." Though the suppression of a name may sometimes be reverential, rather than contemptuous, it is evidently not so here. They, in the heat of their indignation, would have the apostles to suppose that His name was unworthy their mention. The contempt, however, I think, was assumed, for their very antagonism shows that they had a deep faith in the mystic grandeur of His character. The language expresses—(3) Their reluctant testimony to the progress of Christianity. "Behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." A stronger testimony than this to the zeal of the apostles, and to the growth of their cause, could scarcely have been given. It was given by the most intelligent men in Jerusalem—men who knew the prevailing feeling and the general character of the population well—men, too, who would have ignored and denied the fact if they could. Circumstances wrested it from their reluctant lips. Their language expresses—

(4) A foreboding of a terrible retribution ; “and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” To “bring blood upon the head,” is a peculiar Hebrew idiom ; meaning to make one answer for the murder or the death of another. (Alexander) There was conscience in this. They felt that they were implicated in the horrid crime of the crucifixion of Christ ; and that which they once dared in the fury of their rage, when they cried “let his blood be upon us,” they now deprecated as the direst of judgments.

Secondly : *Their defence.* How did the apostles answer this address of the high priest, who spoke in the name of the Sanhedrim ? Here are their words :—“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things ; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” In this defence, which Peter, as was his wont, delivers not only for himself but also for his brother apostles, we have several things worthy of note. (1) Here is one of the grandest of principles. “We ought to obey God rather than men.” This principle he had enunciated before. (See notes on chap. iv. 19, 20.) (2) Here is one of the most wonderful of facts. “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus.” This is the great crowning fact of Christianity. It is the corner stone in the great temple of Gospel Truth.\* (3) Here is one of the most appalling of crimes—“Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.” Here he charges, as he had more than once done before, the crime of crucifixion home upon them. What superiority to the fear of man, what inflexible fidelity to truth, what more than human heroism, are exhibited by Peter as he stands before the most august assembly of the land, and charges home upon them the greatest crime ever

\* See “Homily on the Resurrection of Christ,” Third Series, Vol. I., page 19.



perpetrated under Heaven! (4) Here we have the most glorious of communications. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand," &c. Here, observe, that Christ is exalted to the highest dignity—"the right hand of God." That He is exalted to the highest dignity for the sublimest functions—"to be a Prince and a Saviour"—that in these functions He has to communicate to the world the greatest of blessings—"repentance," and "forgiveness of sins." (5) Here we have the most exalted of missions. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." The apostles here regarded themselves as witnesses of the greatest realities—"these things"—the great things of the Gospel; and as fellow-workers with the Great Spirit Himself. "So is also the Holy Ghost."



## Germs of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*Good Men in Both Worlds.*

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Heb. xii. 1, 2.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-fifth.*

**M**OST preachers of any lengthened experience have had this passage as a text. It has been treated in such a variety of ways, and looked upon in so many aspects, that it is all but impossible to invent a plan of treatment that shall invest it with those charms of novelty which will suggest new trains of useful thought. The grand subject is the *Christian Life*: its nature, a "race;" its qualifications,

freedom from all encumbrances, and the exercise of patience; its *spectators*, a "great cloud of witnesses;" and its *supreme object of attention*, "looking unto Jesus," &c.

For the sake of a slight variety of treatment, we may look on the words as presenting to our notice, *the good that have departed to the celestial world; the good that are still living on this earth; and the glorious Redeemer of both.*

I. THE GOOD THAT HAVE DEPARTED TO THE CELESTIAL WORLD. From the words we learn four things concerning them.

First: That they *live*. Who? The old saints whose faith is celebrated in the preceding chapter. Though some of them had left the world for thousands of years, they were still living. Abel was still alive. Arguments for the immortality of the soul have been frequently stated in the "Homilist." \* All who were ever here are still in existence. There is no extinction of souls.

Secondly: They live in *vast numbers*. "Cloud of witnesses." "Cloud," a symbol for throng. A *great* cloud—a *great* throng. In Paul's time, the multitudes of the saved were *great*, they were "innumerable." They have been increasing ever since, and will increase to the end of time. The saved will out-number the lost. Where sin abounded, grace will much more abound.

Thirdly: They live as *spectators of their surviving brethren on earth*. They are "witnesses" which "encompass" the Christian race-course, and they may mark the steps of every competitor. The word here translated "witnesses," (*μαρτύρων*) does not necessarily mean spectators. Still, as Paul's allusion is, undoubtedly, to the spectators pressing round to see the competitors in their contest for the prize, (Phil. iii. 14) the probability is, that the idea was in his mind when he used the word, as well as the idea expressed by Alford, of attesting by their own case the faithfulness of God to His people. Though unseen, they are near—they encompass

\* See Vol. IV., page 5; also page 289.

us. Though with the politics, commerce, and crafts of the world they have nothing to do, they are intensely alive to its spiritual interests and activities. In the ancient games, multitudes occupied the circular seats in the amphitheatre as spectators of the contesting parties. To this, allusion is here made. Death, after all, perhaps, does not take us out of the world.

The text leads us to look at—

II. THE GOOD THAT ARE STILL LIVING ON THIS EARTH. We are here taught concerning them—

First : *That their life is like a race-course.* It is a "race set before them." A race has its *limitation*, so has life ; its *rule*, so has life ; its *intense activity*, so has life ; its *speedy termination*, so has life. A race is soon run ; the period between the start and the close may be full of excitement and activity, but is very short.

Secondly : *That their life, to realize its end, requires great attention.* (1) There must be a *divestment of all encumbrances*. "Let us lay aside every weight." The competitors in the Grecian races were careful about this. They took care not to burden themselves with heavy clothing, or much food. Every effort was employed to free themselves of all unnecessary "weight." So with us, if we would successfully run the race of life. Carnalism, worldliness, religious ritualism, formalities, and prejudices, are encumbrances by which thousands lose the grand end of life. (2) There must be a *freeing oneself from besetting sin*. "The sin which doth so easily beset us." Perhaps all have some peculiar propensity which may be regarded as his besetting sin. There is *animalism* ; some are intensely animal in all their appetites. There is *irascibility* ; some are most irritable in temper. There is *covetousness* ; some are avaricious and money-loving in the extreme. Some are *ambitious*, having a lust after power ; some are *vain*, having a lust for show and admiration. The strongest sinful tendency of the man is his *besetting sin* ; the sin, as the word literally signifies, that hangs about

him, and encircles his very being. (3) There must be the *exercise of great patience of soul in our efforts*. "Let us run with patience." There must be a calm self-possession of soul, and a resolute determination to persevere unto the end. All this, then, is required in order to succeed in this life-race.

Thirdly : *That their life should be salutarily influenced by the good who are departed*. "Wherefore seeing." If it is meant that they are "witnesses" to our conduct, this should act as a powerful stimulus to right effort. How should the consciousness that their pure and loving eyes are on us stir our deepest souls into earnestness? Or if it is meant that they are "witnesses" to the value and glory of a godly life, then, too, we should feel the impulse. What did the history of Abel witness concerning sacrifice? Enoch concerning death and a future world? Abraham concerning faith? Moses concerning the wisdom of a right choice? Though dead, they speak to us still.

The text leads us to contemplate—

III. THE GLORIOUS REDEEMER OF THE GOOD IN BOTH WORLDS. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." The word "our" is not in the original, and its insertion here gives a wrong idea. The passage does not mean that Christ is the author and completer of faith in His disciples. This is true; but is not *the* truth which the apostle endeavoured to express. The word translated "author" is sometimes translated "prince," and sometimes "captain." The idea of the apostle is that Christ is the *chief example of human goodness* :—That amongst all the great examples specified in the preceding chapter, or found in the world's annals of goodness, Christ is pre-eminent. The apostle does not insert His name in the grand list of heroes and worthies enrolled in the preceding chapter but here gives Him a place by Himself and directs to Him the supreme attention of his readers. Don't forget the others, but keep your eye ever "looking unto Jesus." Let the mariner avail himself of the *light of all the stars*, but let him guide his bark by the pole

star. Taking then the expression, "author and finisher of faith" as meaning the chief or supreme example of human goodness in all worlds, the words indicate three things that gave Him the pre-eminence as an example.

First : He was pre-eminent as an example in the *spirit that inspired Him*. "For the joy that was set before him." What was the *joy*? The prospect of *His own* blessedness and exaltation? No! No! There is not a particle of selfishness in His joy. His joy was the joy of *benevolence*, the joy of diminishing the misery, and augmenting the happiness of the universe; the joy of *piety*, the joy of putting down rebellion against the Infinite Father, and establishing order and loyalty in the spheres of discord and insurrection. There are men whose religion is but a struggle for heaven. Their eyes and hearts are fastened on celestial joys. They have not the spirit of Christ. He pleased not Himself. His delight was in doing the will of God. We are like Him only as we become self-oblivious.

Secondly : He was pre-eminent in the *grandeur of soul with which He met unparalleled sufferings*. His sufferings were truly incomparable. "The cross." What physical anguish, what ignominy, and, in His case, what overwhelming mental agony does "the cross," represent. But with what spirit did He "endure" it? He "*despised the shame*." The cross is not now associated with "*shame*." It is with us, in Christendom, the symbol of all that is glorious. It is worn as an ornament around the neck of beauty, it sits as a crown of glory on the spires of our churches and the domes of our cathedrals, it flaunts in the standards of triumphant armies, and it gleams as the choicest gem in the diadem of sovereigns. Poetry rings with its praises. But in the public estimation it was, in the 'days of Jesus, what the guillotine is now in France, and what the gallows is now in England. But He *despised* the popular "*shame*" connected with it. He dared public sentiment; He fronted the conventional feeling of His age with sublime heroism; He "*endured the cross*," praying for His enemies, and commending His spirit.

to God. Herein let us follow Him, and meet our appointed lot as He met the cross.

Thirdly: He was pre-eminent in the *exaltation which He ultimately met*. "And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The expression means great exaltation. In another place we are told that He is "exalted far above all heavens." How high is that!

Here, then, is our great example in the race of life. Let us *keep looking* at Him. A constant looking at Him will keep all other objects in our horizon in the right place, brace us with magnanimity under the trials of life, enhance our zeal, and transfigure us into His own image.



SUBJECT:—*Noah's first Consciousness of Safety after the Deluge.*

"And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry."—Gen. viii. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-sixth.

**N**O fact in the history of mankind is more universally attested than that of the deluge. Tradition has rung it into the ear of almost all nations, and written it in the legendary tales and mythological narratives of the leading tribes of Adam's race. "If we take the circuit of the globe," says a quaint old writer, "and enquire of the inhabitants of every climate, we shall find that *the fame of the Deluge is gone through the earth*."\* The question of its *universality* is of no practical moment, and theology may let it rest in the region of speculation and debate. One thing is obvious, and on all hands admitted, that it was extensive enough to sweep from the earth the whole race of man, Noah and his family alone excepted.

The text points us to the moment when Noah seems first

\* See Kitto, Vol. I., p. 542. Dr. Pye Smith, p. 74. Dr. Hamilton on the "Pentateuch," p. 207.

assured that the dire calamity was over and past. There on Ararat he looks forth from the ark that had borne him and his with safety over those surging waters that had engulfed his race. In that ark you have the embryo of all coming generations, from it rolled down all the streams of human life that have ever flowed since through earth, and that the great ocean of eternity has since received.

Now, it is somewhat natural, and it may not be either uninteresting or unprofitable, to speculate concerning Noah's impression on his first out-look upon "the face of the ground that was dry."

I. He would, probably, be impressed with the GREATNESS OF THE CALAMITY HE HAD ESCAPED. The roaring, rushing world of waters had, it is true, subsided, they ran away to their ocean-beds like satiated lions skulking to their lair. But they had wrought a terrible desolation, they had reduced the whole earth to a vast charnel house; every living voice is hushed, and all is as silent as the grave. The patriarch perhaps, would feel two things in relation to this terrible calamity.

First: *That it was the result of sin.* "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." (vi. 5—7.) Whatever might have been the physical cause, one thing is clear that sin was the moral. This it was that opened the windows of heaven and broke up the fountains of the mighty deep. All suffering springs from sin. Hell grows out of wrong. The patriarch would also probably feel—

Secondly: *That it was only a faint type of the final judgment.* There is a deluge of fire to come. "As it was in the days of Noah," &c. What gratitude would warm and fill his heart as he now reflected upon the terrible calamity through which he had safely passed. His anxieties, fears, and toils had been immense, but all was over now, and he was safe.

On the first out-look of Noah upon "the face of the ground that was dry"—

II. He would probably be impressed with the EFFICACY OF THE REMEDIAL EXPEDIENT. How would he admire the ark that had so nobly battled with the billows and so safely weathered the storm.

First : *This expedient was Divine.* God sketched the plan of the vessel, superintended its building, and helped the builder in every effort. (Gen. vi. 14—16.) There was no genius amongst that generation of giants that could have planned such a ship. Christianity, the great expedient for saving souls from the deluge of moral evil, is God's plan. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh," &c. Philosophy exhausted itself in the trial.

Secondly : *This expedient alone was effective.* When the dreadful storm came on, when the waters began to rush from the floating seas above and the foaming seas below, filling up the valleys and gradually ascending the mountains, we may rest assured that every one of that terror-stricken generation seized some scheme to rescue him from the threatened doom. The loftiest trees were climbed, the highest heights were scaled ; but all in vain. None were saved but those who were in the ark. So it is in the great moral danger to which all are exposed. Men have their different schemes of salvation, but only one will succeed. "There is no other name," &c. Christianity is as unlike all other remedial expedients, as the ark was unlike all the productions of antediluvian art.

Thirdly : The expedient was only effective *to those who committed themselves to it.* Noah and his family entered the ark and were saved ; all the others were lost. Most of the lost perhaps saw the ark ; many perhaps studied it scientifically ; some probably greatly admired it ; and not a few, it may be, intended to enter it. But all were lost who did not *actually* enter. So in relation to Christianity. You may study it, admire it, and intend to adopt it ; but all in vain.

Again, on the first out-look of Noah upon "the face of the ground that was dry"—



III. He would probably be impressed with the wisdom of his faith in God. He must have felt now—

First: That it was wiser to believe in the word of God, than to trust to *the conclusions of his own reason*. He might have reasoned from the mercy of God, and the general experience of mankind, that such an event as the deluge would never have happened; but he trusted in God's word, and it had proved true. He must have felt—

Secondly: That it was wiser to believe in the word of God, than to trust to *the uniformity of nature*. Nature, as she proceeded with an unbroken regularity, and undeviating march before his eyes year after year, might have spoken to his reason the impossibility of a deluge. But he trusted God rather than nature: it proved the wiser course. He must have felt—

Thirdly: That it was wiser to believe in God's word, than to trust to *the current opinion of his contemporaries*. The general opinion of the men of his age was, that the idea of a deluge was absurd, and that he was a brainless fanatic for entertaining such a notion. He, perhaps, was the subject of their scorn and ridicule during the hundred and twenty years in which he was building the ark. Still, he trusted God rather than his contemporaries, and now he felt that his course was the wiser one.

Now, will not the feelings of the good man when he first enters heaven, correspond in some measure with the feelings of Noah on the occasion when he first looked from his ark, saw the face of the "dry ground," and *felt* that he was safe? Will there not be a similar impression of the tremendous calamity that has been escaped? Will not the sainted spirit, as it feels itself safe in the celestial state, reflect with adoring gratitude upon that deluge of sin and suffering from which it has been for ever delivered? Will it not reflect with admiration and praise upon that wonderful remedial expedient by which it was rescued?—an expedient like the ark—Divine, alone effective, and effective only to those who committed themselves to it? Will it not feel, with rapturous delight,

how much wiser it was for him to believe in God, than to trust the conclusions of his own judgment, the uniformity of nature, or the current opinion of his contemporaries?

Brothers, there is an awful deluge coming. The clouds that hang over the universal conscience of the world, not only prophesy it, but are preparing for it; they are nursing the tempest, they are forging the thunderbolts and kindling the lightnings. There is a remedial expedient, there is an ark of safety—the only one. Trust not to thy reason, nor to nature, nor to the prevailing sentiment of thine age. Believe in God and enter the ark, and thou shalt escape the ruin of the approaching catastrophe.



SUBJECT :—*Poor, yet Rich.*

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of Heaven.”  
—Matt. v. 3.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-seventh.

**I**N the opening verses of this chapter, (v. 3—12) we have seven beatitudes. The number “seven” is the symbol of perfection; so that seven beatitudes intimate a perfection of blessedness. And the blessedness of Christians is perfect, their redemption is complete. An eminent commentator says:—“The seven beatitudes form an ascending line, in which the new life is traced from stage to stage, from its commencement to its completion.” And the basis of this ascending line is poverty in spirit. “The poor in spirit” are those who, in reference to their spirit, feel themselves poor—those who inwardly realize their need of spiritual things—those who have a deep inward consciousness of spiritual poverty. “Their’s is the kingdom of heaven” in its fulness of riches; their’s are those spiritual blessings they feel the want of. The poverty in spirit is met in “the kingdom of heaven” by an abundance of riches, the spiritual blessings

in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The poor in spirit have the true riches of Christ's kingdom ; partially here, and fully hereafter.

Thus, then, in our text we have *a class pronounced blessed, and the grounds of the benediction.*

I. THE SUBJECTS OF THE BENEDICTION. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Analyze poverty in spirit as explained above into one or two of its elements. It embraces such as these :—A sense of spiritual ignorance ; a sense of moral depravity ; a sense of merited wretchedness.

First : *There is a sense of spiritual ignorance.* The man who is "poor in spirit" feels his need of a knowledge of Divine truth : he is a devout inquirer after truth. Conscious of his poverty in regard to truth—in regard both to its possession and appreciation—such an one makes earnest and humble efforts, in dependence on the Divine guidance, to obtain and apprehend it. He is free from the dominion of prejudice and of everything that would exalt itself against the ready reception of the truth in all its purity, fulness and freshness. He feels his moral blindness as a sinner in regard to Divine truth, and desires that his eyes may be opened to behold wondrous things out of God's law. He feels his need of the Holy Spirit to reveal to him the things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man, but which God has prepared for them that love Him." In a word, he is poor in spirit in regard to *truth*.

Secondly : *There is a sense of moral depravity.* The "poor in spirit" have a deep feeling that they are sinners—sinners both legally and constitutionally. They feel that they are sinners in the eye of the law, and that their whole soul is bent on sin. They are such as the Spirit has convinced of sin. They know and feel that they need to be saved, both from the guilt and power of sin. There is the absence in them of a spiritual fulness and repletion in respect to holiness : and there is the presence in them of a deep conviction of personal sinfulness. They feel that "in them there dwelleth

no good thing" : that their whole nature is corrupt and prone to that which is evil—the will perverse and rebellious, the affections vitiated and disordered, the members of the body "instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." This is the language of their heart : "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." In a word, they are poor in spirit in regard to *holiness*.

Thirdly : *There is a sense of merited wretchedness.* "The poor in spirit" have the divinely wrought conviction that as sinners they have incurred and deserve eternal misery. They feel, that on account of their moral impurity—their inherent depravity and actual sin—they deserve nothing but condemnation and misery, and that for ever. They feel, that they are by nature and practice, involved in a state of moral depravity and sinfulness from which they cannot redeem themselves : and in so far they have a deep sense of wretchedness. They know, and they know it as a divinely implanted conviction, that the wages of sin is death, and that so, in themselves and as sinners, they are far from the fountain of happiness and bliss, and can have only a fearful "looking for of judgment," &c. In a word, they are poor in spirit in regard to *happiness*.

Are we then of this class,—“the poor in spirit?” Are we poor in spirit in regard to *truth*, *holiness*, and *happiness*, and have we been awakened to a sense of our *ignorance*, *sin*, and *misery*? If so, *blessed* are we. We have the Saviour’s benediction.

II. THE GROUNDS OF THE BENEDICTION. “For their’s is the kingdom of Heaven.” Jesus pronounces the “poor in spirit” to be blessed as having the kingdom of heaven for their possession. Poor in spirit, they are rich in possession, having that kingdom whose treasures make the soul rich in time and through eternity. Its fulness of spiritual riches—truth for the spiritually ignorant, purity for the spiritually depraved, *blessedness* for the spiritually miserable—belongs to “the

poor in spirit." View "the kingdom of heaven" as meeting the *felt wants* described under the former head.

The kingdom of heaven meets the poor in spirit :—

First : *In the revelation of Divine truth.* He that humbles himself and becomes as a little child enjoys Divine disclosures of truth. The hungry soul is filled with the food of Divine revelation : the poor in spirit partake of truth, specially of the truth of Christ. Yea, that truth becomes their inseparable possession. The Spirit so brings it home to them, to their mind and heart, that it becomes as it were a part of their being, and they are thereby ennobled and enriched. It develops itself in thought, feeling, principle, and is thus indeed a rich possession, a real blessedness, a joy for ever.

Secondly : *In the bestowment of moral purity.* To the poor in spirit, Jesus is made of God both righteousness and sanctification. The poor in spirit can name Jesus by this name "The Lord our righteousness." And they are besides renewed in true holiness. In them a work of sanctification, in its nature complete and progressive, is being carried on. They are being changed into the very image of Jesus, from glory to glory.

Thirdly : *In the securing of unending bliss.* The poor in spirit have blessedness here and happiness in reserve. They have blessedness in possession, the blessedness of pardoned sinners, of a life of holiness, of Divine disclosures of truth, of Divine sonship, &c. But in its full glory and fruition it is a thing reserved. Here their happiness is often mixed : in heaven it will be complete and without alloy, and never withdrawn.

Are you in search of blessedness? Then here is true blessedness, the only true blessedness, namely, to be in possession of "the kingdom of heaven." Here are boundless provisions to meet the deepest spiritual poverty—truth for spiritual ignorance, purity for moral depravity, bliss for merited wretchedness. Only be "poor in spirit," "set your affections on things above," "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

GLORIFICATION.

SUBJECT :—*The Rest of God's People.*

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. . . .  
Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after  
the same example of unbelief."—Heb. iv. 9, 11.

## Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Sixty-eighth.

**A**LL mankind are seeking something in which to repose. The inquiry of every one is, "Who will shew us any good?" Most seek it in the world, and seldom find anything save vexation and disappointment. But the Bible reveals One who is willing to bestow a lasting peace. The Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The rest which Christ bestows in this world is comparative. It is more than its recipients once possessed; but it is not complete. It is only the foretaste of a fuller, a perfect rest. To this, the text refers, "There remaineth a rest to the people of God."

The verses suggest three enquiries :—

I. WHAT IS THE REST? One very common notion of it is that it is an entire cessation from labor. To those who have been toiling all their lives, this is the prominent idea that it presents to the mind. But it is something more than this, The word translated "rest" (*σαββατισμός*) denotes a keeping of Sabbath. It is not a state of mere repose. As the Sabbath, a time set apart for God, brings its duties, the noblest man can engage in on earth, so will this eternal Sabbath. The Sabbath among the Jews was peculiarly sacred. No secular work was allowed to be done on it. Toil was not permitted to profane it. The decalogue even forbade the use of the inferior animals, so that it might be a time of rest both for man and beasts. It was a day devoted exclusively to the Lord. So will this be. It will be a greater, because a perfect rest. The rest of God from the work of creation, the rest of man from worldly labor—these were foreshadowings and pledges of the eternal rest. In what will it peculiarly consist? It will be—

First: *A rest from sin.* It is for those who are purified from all that is evil. The unholy cannot possess it. They will not be allowed to partake of it. Nothing shall enter it that defileth, nothing that maketh a lie.

Secondly: *It will be a rest from sorrow.* This often comes to the Christian from the sins of others. When he is removed from these, he will have no more to trouble him. But these blessings are only negative. It consists of what is positive also. (1) It is a bestowment of eternal life. This is the Christian's peculiar privilege. The Gospel it was that brought life and immortality to light. (2) It is being with Christ. Now we see Him but by the eye of faith: then we shall see Him face to face. (3) It is working for God without weariness, and with full powers to do so.

II. WHEN IS THE REST? It is future. It is not a rest in this world. This life is a life of trouble, and strife, and toil. It is a period of discipline, and stern conflict. In it we work for the future, and upon it the future depends. Like a day of battle it will bring eternal peace, or unending bondage. It is true that this rest begins in this world. It commences with the renewed soul when it first "looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." It brightens upon us more and more as we rise from the lower, the temporal, to the higher, the eternal life. It is fully revealed to us when we have done with mortality and sin. Until then we cannot completely enter into, nor enjoy, "the rest that remaineth for the people of God."

III. FOR WHOM IS THE REST. They are not all who profess to be the followers of the Saviour. They are a peculiar people. They are those who love holiness, and hate iniquity and sin. Their hearts are set to do right. Though in the world, they are not of the world. It is not for all men, because all will not receive it. They do not wish it. They will not obey God on earth; how could they serve Him in heaven? They hate the shadow of this rest. To some it is a weariness and a grief.

would willingly abolish it from the world. How, then, they enjoy the substance?

the Christian, these words are full of hope and consolation. Weeping may endure for a night, but will come with the morning! The sins of the past rise up in sorrow before him; but he has a rest that remains. The world may be, and often is, a land of loss and of the shadow of death; but he presses forward and of righteousness, of life, of light, of God.

the neglecter of religion, these words convey nothing of despair. There is a rest remaining, but it is not for him. and again he has been invited to the Saviour, but he preferred the things of the world to those of eternity. casts realities away for shadows. Therefore he will have no part in this rest.

H. B.

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## Biblical Exegesis.

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EPHES. VI. 17.

τὴν μάχαιραν τοῦ Πνεύματος  
στὶ ῥῆμα Θεοῦ.

This passage is very often quoted, or alluded to, with the incorrect understanding that the "word of God," mentioned in the Bible, and that this "word" is employed by the Spirit of God. This notion, we shall attempt to disprove; and that, to say the least, we shall succeed in showing that it is probably erroneous.

The apostle is here describing the various parts of the armour of God, which he mentions one by one, and as he mentions, explains by a genitive, which gives the spiritual



thing intended by the figure. Thus we have "the preparation of the gospel of peace;" that is, the Gospel is the thing signified by the figurative term "preparation," (*ἑτοιμασία*) which alludes to the greaves worn by soldiers;—"the shield of faith;" where faith is spoken of as a shield;—and "the helmet of salvation;" where salvation is figured as a helmet. Or, if we please, taking the technical term of the grammarians, we may regard this as the *Genitive of Ablation*, that is, which denotes the source whence derived, or that which supplies the thing denoted by the governing word. This makes no important difference. According to this, the Gospel supplies greaves; faith, a shield; salvation, a helmet. The point to which we direct attention, is *the identity* of the things mentioned; first figuratively, then literally. The Gospel is identical with the greaves; faith, with the shield; and salvation, with the helmet.

Now when we come to "the sword of the Spirit," why depart from the principle hitherto followed through the passage? Why say the sword *employed* by the Spirit? Such a sudden change of exposition does violence to the laws of language. It appears to us that nothing can be plainer than that, as the other parts of the panoply mentioned, as greaves, shield, and helmet, are the Gospel, faith and salvation respectively—so the sword is the Spirit. The Gospel furnishes you with greaves, that is, you may so employ it, faith is your shield, salvation your helmet, and the Spirit your sword.

In order further to establish this point, let us compare 1 Thess. v. 8.

ἐνδυσάμενοι θώρακα πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης  
καὶ περικεφαλαίαν ἐλπίδα σωτηρίας.

Here, the genitive is used in the first member, and two accusatives in mutual apposition in the second. It is unquestionable that this use of the genitive is equivalent to apposition, that the two grammatical forms have precisely the same force, and that our translators have rightly rendered both. "The breastplate of faith and love, and *for* a helmet the hope of salvation."

Just so, in the passage of Ephesians under consideration, the apostle means to exhort us to take *for* a sword, the Spirit.

But we are at once met with the objection, that this view is inconsistent with the latter clause, "which is the word of God." If the *Spirit* and the *sword* are identical, they must both be identical with the *word*. But how can the Spirit be the same as the *word*.

Let us look at the Greek.  $\delta \epsilon \sigma \tau \iota \rho \eta \mu \alpha \Theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon$ . You observe that the relative pronoun is neuter, and therefore cannot agree with  $\mu \acute{\alpha} \chi \alpha \iota \rho \alpha \nu$ , which is feminine. One would naturally refer it to  $\pi \nu \epsilon \upsilon \mu \alpha \tau \omicron \varsigma$ , which is neuter. The only possible answer is, that  $\delta$  is in the neuter by attraction to  $\rho \eta \mu \alpha$ . To this, we reply, that it is unnecessary to resort to attraction, since there is already a neuter antecedent, namely,  $\pi \nu \epsilon \upsilon \mu \alpha \tau \omicron \varsigma$ . You should only be driven to attraction by a proof that  $\pi \nu \epsilon \upsilon \mu \alpha \tau \omicron \varsigma$  cannot be the antecedent. But this proof is not forthcoming.

On the other hand, there does not seem to be any impropriety in identifying  $\pi \nu \epsilon \upsilon \mu \alpha$  and  $\rho \eta \mu \alpha$ . The latter word, which is to be carefully distinguished from  $\Lambda \omicron \gamma \omicron \varsigma$ , the Eternal Word, is often used in the singular number to signify a *Divine energy*, by which works are effected. Matt. iv. 4.—"Man doth not live by bread alone, but by *every word* ( $\epsilon \pi \iota \pi \alpha \nu \tau \iota \rho \eta \mu \alpha \tau \iota$ ) that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Heb. xi. 3.—"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word ( $\rho \eta \mu \alpha \tau \iota$ ) of God." Heb. vi. 5.—"And have tasted the good *word* of God," ( $\kappa \alpha \iota \kappa \alpha \lambda \omicron \nu \gamma \epsilon \nu \sigma \alpha \mu \acute{\epsilon} \nu \omicron \varsigma \Theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon \rho \eta \mu \alpha$ ) which is evidently closely related in meaning to the clause which immediately follows, "and the powers of the world to come." Rom. x. 17.—"The hearing is by the word of God" ( $\delta \iota \alpha \rho \eta \mu \alpha \tau \omicron \varsigma \Theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon$ ); that is, when God speaks to a mortal, He puts forth a Divine power to make the man know both that he is spoken to, and who it is that speaks. Noah would hardly have built the ark, nor Abraham offered up his son, had they not known certainly by whom they were commanded to do so. This Divine operation on the human

faculties, is by the Spirit of God. The Spirit and the word become thus identified

The above result which we have arrived at by grammatical study of the original, is essentially the view taken by the oldest and best commentators. Theodoret says, "He calls the sword of the Spirit, the operation of the Spirit; and the operation of the Spirit, he calls the word of God." Some of the best of the modern commentators also adopt the same view.

It is remarkable that  $\rho\eta\mu\alpha$  in the singular does not occur in St. John's Gospel. The word in Heb. iv. 12, "The word of God is quick and powerful," &c., is not  $\rho\eta\mu\alpha$ , but  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ .

Let us in a few words sum up. Negatively: The apostle does not here call the letter of Scripture the sword of the Spirit. Positively: But he calls the Spirit a sword, and identifies this with the energy which makes known God and His will. This energy comes to us by way of attack, fighting against and slaying our lusts.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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In relation to the Rule of Faith, four chief doctrines divide the Christian world.

First, there is the doctrine of the Romish Church, which not only regards the Church as the authoritative interpreter of Scripture, but also the traditions of the Church as authoritative for doctrines not discernible in Scripture.

Then, there is the Ultra-Protestant doctrine, which discards both traditional doctrine and traditional interpretation, and trusts everything to "private judgment."

Thirdly, there is the Quaker doctrine, which is essentially the same with that of some modern spiritualists, who exalt some inward principle above the Scriptures. This principle is sometimes named "inner light," or "the Spirit," sometimes "consciousness," "instinct," or the like. This principle has the right of choosing amongst scriptural statements those which are in harmony with itself, and of explaining away or rejecting the rest. It has also the right of introducing new doctrines, which are not found in Scripture.

Lastly, there is the view of standard English divines, which regards the Bible as the only Rule of Faith, but in interpretation is guided by the general consent of antiquity.

On these conflicting views, the student may be guided to a legitimate decision by the writings of the celebrated and eminent Charles Leslie. His theological works are in two volumes folio, 1721, and are nearly all directed against the various heresies of that day, which, under different names, are re-appearing now. Several of Charles Leslie's works have been separately re-published in recent years.

To the works of Leslie may be advantageously added Canon Wordsworth's treatise on "The Inspiration of Scripture," which contains some valuable remarks on the grand error of the Roman Catholics respecting tradition.

Dr. Lee's treatise on "The Inspiration of Scripture" is deservedly held in high estimation. It is full of learning and originality, and may be said to furnish the student with materials for knowledge and judgment on the subject in greater abundance and completeness than any other work. It was this book which procured for the author his present eminent position as examining chaplain to Archbishop Trench.

With regard to the "History of the Canon," it is not necessary for the student to push his inquiries beyond the *Books of the New Testament*. With regard to the Old, it

can easily be established that the Canon was the same at the Christian Era as at present. For the New Testament, the most convenient book is Brooke Foss Wescott's "General View of the History of the Canon of the New Testament during the First Four Centuries."

On the "Criticism of the New Testament," that is, the settlement of the text, the student will find ample information, clearly given, in the Rev. F. H. Scrivener's "Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament." As this work was published before the discovery of the "Codex Sinaiticus," it will be necessary also to procure the "Full Collation of the Codex Sinaiticus with the received text of the New Testament," with a Critical Introduction, by the same author.

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## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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### *The Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.*

"For our conversation (πολιτευμα city-system) is (ὑπάρχει is from the beginning) in heaven."—Phil. iii. 20.

WE have heard much of late concerning "godliness in common life," and we have been told that "a man's professions of piety are to be trusted only in proportion to his discharge of ordinary duties; and that what society wants is, not saints, but honest men—good husbands, fathers, and neighbours. Church-going and family prayers cannot be allowed to atone for cold-heartedness and meanness, and it is quite possible that godliness, if not hypocritical, is only another form of selfishness."

Now, in all this kind of talk, as in much beside which is

proffered as new doctrine in these days, there is a mixture of truth and error—much which is good and right, and as old as the hills; much, also, which is one-sided, narrow, and perverted. On the one hand, it may be, that there have been and are hypocrites, false professors, who try to hide their faults from others and themselves under a cloak of religion. On the other hand, there has doubtless been a tendency, even amongst the sincere, to separate too much religion and common life, as if one could be rightly conducted apart from another. Religion has been put on one side, as an important business indeed, but suitable for separate attention; and the purifying waters of godliness have not been made to mingle, as they ought, with the streams of every-day thought, feeling, and action. It has been regarded as an affair of another world, to be minded here, not always and everywhere, but at stated times, Sundays and other holy-days; and in proper places, as churches and chapels. As a consequence, we have seen much unpractical devotion on the one hand, and much unsanctified business on the other. The so-called “saint” has done, “in the way of business,” things which would not endure the test of a sound conscience or the scrutiny of Omniscient purity. Or, sometimes neglecting business altogether, he has given himself up to the false luxury of pious sloth; and while believing himself to have visions of heaven, has on earth proved but “a cumberer of the ground.”

The text, and the whole passage to which it belongs, will help us in determining the truth. The apostle has just been complaining of some persons whose life was inconsistent with the Gospel. Their sins are so serious and notorious that they are injurious to the holy cause, “enemies of the cross,” that cross which is the symbol of the Gospel, and which as the memorial of a stupendous sacrifice and holy surrender of self, ought ever to be a centre for a holy people. It is only defiled and its influence nullified by these base allies. On this account St. Paul weeps. What a sight—this great and *strong man in tears*! He sums up their wickedness in the

remarkable words, *who mind earthly things*. He recommends his own conduct as an opposite example. This he does, not arrogantly, but as an apostle, with authority, and by inspiration. Just as he sets forth his doctrine as Divine truth to be received on pain of perdition, so he points to his life as to be followed by believers, because he himself is a follower of the life of the Lord. And whereas they whom he condemns "mind earthly things," he says of himself, *our conversation is in heaven*.

The fulness of the meaning of these words comprehends *the Christian state, hope, and duty*.

I. *The Christian state*. Heaven is a reality now existing, although only known by faith. To heaven we belong already, not to earth. In heaven is the source and centre of our life; the Object of our love, the spring of our action. When Christ was on earth, He lived a life of perfect righteousness and love, a life quite unearthly, actuated by heavenly principles. It was closed by so high and holy a death, that after resurrection, He could remain no more amongst the unworthy inhabitants of earth. He must be exalted to another sphere. He is fit for the throne of heaven. Heaven shall be the centre of His influence. Thither is He raised, that He may reign, and "fill all things." His throne is in heaven, but His kingdom extends to earth. Here His power is exerted; here His laws are in force; here is still felt the influence of His life and death, the energy of His character and doctrine, the might of His Spirit. Though we live on the earth, it is not our home; our "life is hid," we are the servants of *the King invisible*.

Christ reigns in heaven, and has subjects there. He reigns over the holy angels, the immediate retinue of the Most High, who have never known sin, and whose powers are incalculably beyond ours. He reigns over the holy ones who have departed from earth "in His faith and fear," and who raise a song of redemption in which angels cannot join. These blessed angels, and these deceased human saints form one

grand community, one Church, one kingdom with us who are still in humiliation and conflict here. Though we see them not, we belong to them, and that much more than we belong to the ungodly on earth. We are joined to them by the same laws, the same loyalty, the same essential service, though performed by them and us under different conditions. *Ye are come unto mount Sion.*

II. *The Christian hope.* Heaven, though a reality, is to us a mystery. Though, if we are faithful, the invisible celestial force is more potent than the influence of the world, present though it be, and we already potentially belong to the heavenly country; yet the fulness and the manifestation of our connexion with heaven, and the actual entrance upon it are reserved for the future. This then is the Christian's hope. He is loyal to His King, whom unseen he loves. He is destined to behold HIM one day in glory who was crucified. Who can tell or conceive the bliss of that sight, of nearer intercourse and union with Him whom the disciples loved without fully knowing, whom apostles proclaimed as the Christ, and in whom, on their testimony, we have believed?

We shall not only see the King, but be associated with His most favored subjects. Heaven is a congregation of pure and happy beings in intimate society—laborers receiving their reward, conquerors triumphing, benefactors of their race, watching from higher ground the progress of right, servants entered into their Master's joy.

Connected with them are our own departed friends. When the soul left the body, instead of going amongst strangers, it was received to better friends and old acquaintances, to a prepared place, and a new and better home.

Disembodied spirits, though in Paradise, are not in perfection. For that they wait until the resurrection morning, the birthday of the spiritual body. These bodies of ours characterize the period of our humiliation. They chain us to earth. They relate us to beasts. Their powers are limited, *their necessities base.* But as we are citizens of heaven, it is



unfitting that we be long tenants of these earthly dwellings. We shall soon forsake them. But it is not enough to be rid of these; we must gain other and nobler. If we leave the hovel, we shall enter the mansion. We will gladly strip off our rags to be clothed in *the best robe*. We lose the corrupt, mean and weak animal body, and gain one which is spiritual, powerful, glorious and incorruptible; the workmanship and gift of His skilful hands, and modelled after His own fashion, who is "the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven." We look for Him to re-appear from that heaven whither He is gone and to which we belong, to come again to befriend us, make the virtual actual, turn faith to sight and consummate redemption, to awake His sleeping brethren, and "change them that are alive and remain." *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.*

III. *The Christian duty* was not only present to the apostle's mind, but was actually fulfilled. "Our conversation is in heaven."

Heaven is our true home: then let us not act or think as if earth were it. Here we are *strangers and pilgrims, and have no abiding city*. We confess it, and seek one to come.

Let us cherish the thought of one day seeing Christ in heaven, of being joined with Him in glory and joy. Let us often commune with Him now, that we may be ready for His nearer presence. Our sins will pierce Him then no more. Why should they now? We will away with all indulgences, pursuits, speech, feelings, thoughts, which are offensive to Him.

Already members of the kingdom of heaven, which includes angels and the spirits of the just—prophets, apostles, martyrs, and our old companions now in peace—if we hope one day to be raised to their abode, let us strive evermore after worthiness of their fellowship.

Wearied of these animal bodies which humble us by meanness, weakness and decay; cheered and elevated by the bright promise of resurrection in spiritual bodies, we will not allow those we now have to betray us to the bondage of sin. *To be carnally minded is death. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.* We must not look for a Christ-like body in the resurrection, if we now live mere animal lives. Remember the words of even a man like St. Paul: *I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: or, as they may be rendered, I buffet my body and lead it about as a slave.*

We are now in a position to judge what is the truth, and what the error, involved in the kind of talk to which reference was made at the beginning, from men who call for morality and undervalue the spiritual life. We not only acknowledge, we urge the necessity and the obligation of what has been called ordinary morality. We utterly repudiate the Christianity of those men who largely profess faith, and use high-flown language concerning spiritual experiences, while they neglect common duties. But we say that earthly duties are made such by the laws of Heaven, and can be performed only by heavenly motives and heavenly grace. Godliness is certainly an affair of another world, but it is to run through all our life here, as an omnipotent sanctifier. True godliness is not any form of selfishness; it is the only enemy of selfishness. For, while it includes care for the highest well-being of the individual, and secures the salvation of soul and body; it does so, not by holding out the hope of a world of self-indulgence beyond the present, as a reward for religion here, but by bringing us under the influence of almighty love. This constrains us to please self no more, but "to live for him who died for us and rose again." It creates and sustains in us an affectionate care for our fellows, as one with Him who "is not ashamed to call them brethren," and is asking us to live and work for them for His sake.

Morality is dependent on godliness as the plant on the soil, the air, the rain and the sunshine. Take these away, and *the grace of the fashion of it perisheth.* They will ever make the

best husbands and fathers, the most honorable men of business and the best citizens, whose sense of justice and whose kindly feelings are constantly nourished and trained by devotion. Intercourse with a God of righteousness, with charity personified in Christ, hearing His word, asking for His spirit, is the best preparation for the work of every day ; and this alone will guide our steps in perplexity, elevate and calm, purify and strengthen our minds ; render us capable of justice, kindness and self-denial ; prepare us for death by fitting us to live, and make us worthy and faithful on earth by giving us the citizenship of heaven.

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### THE WEALTH OF GOD AND THE OBLIGATION OF MAN.

"All souls are mine."—Ezek. xviii. 4.

This is a wonderful utterance. It is the Eternal asserting His claim to souls. It suggests two thoughts :—

I. THE WEALTH OF GOD. He *owns* souls—intelligent, free, influential, deathless souls. First : His wealth is *immense*. The cattle upon a thousand hills are His, the sea is His for He made it, the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof ; all the planets and systems that form the material universe are

His, but what is more than all, *souls* are His, the universe of spirits is His. Think of the *value* of *one* soul. Think of the inexhaustible powers contained in one soul, of the wonderful things that one soul is capable of producing, of the interminable influence for good or bad that one soul originates : and it may be well said, that one soul is of more value than the whole world. A soul can think upon its Maker, the material universe cannot : a soul can change its course by its own volition, the material universe cannot ; a soul can reflect the very nature of

God, the material universe cannot. But if *one* soul is so valuable, what must be the value of all the millions that compose a generation, and of all the generations that ever have been or ever will be? God owns *all* souls. Secondly: His wealth is *righteous*. He has the most absolute, the most unquestionable right to them. He made them: He is the only Creator, and He has the only right. They are His, with all their faculties and powers. Thirdly: His wealth is *inalienable*. Souls cannot be taken from Him, they cannot pass into other hands. Whether they are good or bad, useful or injurious, saved or damned, they are His. They cannot become their own, nor can they become the property of another. They are His, absolutely, righteously, and for ever. Fourthly: His wealth is *ever-augmenting*. Whether He is creating new material worlds and systems or not, some captious spirit may dare to question; but as to the creation of *new* souls, that admits of no debate or question. Souls, by hundreds, come into the world fresh from the Eternal Creator every day. In truth, of all things on the earth, souls alone are new creations. The mountains are old, and the sea is old, and the river is old, and even

the youngest plants and animals that appear are but old materials entered into new combinations, nothing more. But souls are new in the entireness of their nature. Fresh emanations from the Eternal Father are they all. Thus His wealth of souls increases. *Dieu seul est grand mes frères*—"God alone is great, my brethren," exclaimed the eloquent Massillon, as he stood over the corpse of his monarch, charged to deliver the funeral oration. In the sight of the text, we may truly say, "God alone is rich." What are the possessions of the world's millionaires and monarchs, compared to the wealth of Him who owns one soul? Mere dust, falling every minute from the hand; nothing more. The text suggests—

II. THE OBLIGATION OF MAN. If we are His, our duty is obvious. First: *We should act according to His will*. He has made us for a purpose, and it is for us to find out that purpose and fulfil it. He has revealed His will most clearly in our reason and our conscience, as well as in His written Word. It is His will that we should not "live to ourselves"—not seek our own. The selfish man aims to "rob God" of His right.

It is His will that we should centre our affections on Him, love Him with all our hearts, &c. He who sets his affections upon another, violates the right of the Eternal. It is His will that we should avail ourselves of the provisions of mercy in Christ Jesus. To believe on the Mediator, and obtain sanctification through His cleansing influences, are the expressions of His will. We must, in one word, act as stewards, not as proprietors. Secondly: *We should confide implicitly in His protection.* We are His, and if we use ourselves according to His direction, He will take care of us. He will be our shield in the battle, and our refuge in the storm. Thirdly: *We should be jealous for His rights.* (1) We should zealously maintain His rights in ourselves. We should allow no one to extort service or homage from us that belong to God. We should maintain inviolate within us the rights of our Maker. (2) We should practically recognize His right in our fellow-men. We should never require them to render us an affection or service which belongs to God only. We should battle against priest-craft, oppression, and slavery, on the ground of loyalty to Heaven.

#### GOD'S WORD BETTER THAN WEALTH.

"The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."—Ps. cxix. 72.

GOD'S WORD is a law, its force is authoritative, and its function is to regulate. It is not for speculation, but for practice. It is here affirmed that this Word is better than secular wealth. It is of course implied *that material wealth is a good thing.* There are some who profess to despise riches, and to look with something like contempt at that which the world prizes so highly. Such feelings are more frequently feigned than real, and those who profess them would be only too glad to have their exchequer enriched. Where they are real they are foolish, for material wealth is good. It increases our facilities for mental culture, it procures books, teachers, libraries and leisure. It multiplies our sources of pleasure by enabling us to visit distant scenes, and to see new aspects of nature, new modes of life, and new styles of art. It augments our social powers, and greatly extends and deepens our influence with our contemporaries. What the text implies, all wise men will admit, *that material wealth is a good thing. But good*

as it is, the WORD OF GOD is *better*, better than any amount of wealth.

I. IT SECURES A HIGHER CULTURE. Wealth can procure books and leisure, but it cannot supply that stimulus and inspiration that will set the faculties to work. But the books procured, it may be said, will do this. I thankfully grant that there are productions of human genius and learning that exert a quickening influence upon the mind of the thoughtful reader. But the culture that the highest class of such books effects falls miserably below that which the Word of God achieves. The Word of God brings out latent energies of soul that nothing else can reach. It gives a freedom and a force to the intellect, a depth and a purity to the sympathies, a sensibility to the conscience, an invincibility to the purpose, a refinement to the tastes, a penetration to the eye, and a pinion to the imagination, that no other appliances on this earth can furnish. Hence all our great painters, and poets, and authors have caught their inspiration from the scenes and subjects of the Bible.

II. IT INVESTS WITH A HIGHER POWER. *It is granted*

that wealth endows its possessor with a certain kind of power. But very inferior is it to that which the Word of God imparts to its possessor. What power of *influence* does it give! However great the influence which a rich man has on account of his wealth, it is not to be compared to the influence which that man has, who lives out the Word of God in his daily walk. He touches the deepest chords in souls, and their vibrations will ring along the ages. What power of *endurance*! Wealth cannot impart magnanimity, fortitude, courage; but the Word of God does to the highest degree. It enables the soul to glory in tribulation, and to welcome death with rapture.

III. IT OPENS UP HIGHER ENJOYMENTS. Wealth, it is true, supplies enjoyments higher than the grossly animal—the enjoyment of new scenery for example. It affords the means of travel, which is a great pleasure. The opulent man can visit the cradles of civilization, walk the theatres where the terrible dramas of ancient history were acted, stand where Socrates taught, where Demosthenes thundered where Cæsar fell, where Paul preached and where the world's Redeemer died. But the Bible

can give something even of the pleasure of such travelling. He that studies the Word of God travels far away in mind. "You are," to use the language of another, "through the Bible, carried back to share in the patriarchal wanderings and apostolic journeys and voyages. You haunt the shores of the Mediterranean, around which gathered so much of the whole history of the old world, in its conquests, its traffic, its literature, and its idolatries." I lift the leaf of Scripture and am within the curtains of Abraham's tent. I enter the closet where Daniel kneels, I stand by the pillow where Jacob dies; I am near him in Peniel, as he wrestles, and God comes down to confer with His servant. But there are enjoyments which the Bible alone can give—the enjoyment of an *approving conscience, a loving spirit, an ever-brightening future, and the friendship of the everlasting Father.*

IV. IT CONNECTS WITH A HIGHER WORLD. The gold and silver of all the earth can form no connection between us and the celestial state, can procure us no admission into the heavenly world. The Rothschilds and their worldly treasures part for ever at death. "Naked came we

into the world," &c. But the Word of God abides in us, goes with us as our light and our sanctuary.

Let us then value the Bible as the greatest treasure beneath the sun. I examine two things. One is an old patrimonial mansion. I go through its spacious corridors, halls, and rooms, embellished by the devices of many a generation. I saunter over its lawns and gardens; walk its old park too. I survey the many broad acres around, belonging to the lordly estate. The other thing I examine is an old family Bible that has come down through three centuries. I turn over its leaves, which the hand of time has made brittle and brown; I find some verses in almost every chapter marked, and leaves here and there doubled down. On many passages a tear has evidently fallen, some truth shot from the sentence to the reader's heart, and the eye had dropped penitence or joy. On some verses there is the mark of the finger; the reader found something there to chain his heart awhile, and he paused to think. Those tears were shed, and those finger marks were made by various members of the different generations of that old family. The eyes that dropped those tears, and the finger that

made those marks have been dust long ago.

Now, I ask, which has been of the greatest service to that old family, the patrimonial estate, or that old Bible? Which woke the deepest thrills of delight? Which served most to lessen human woe and swell the tide of human bliss? Which originated thoughts and efforts that best contributed to the good of the universe? Which, now, in eternity, is held in the highest esteem by the various members of that long ancestral line into whose hands they fell from time to time? Let reason, let the experience of humanity answer the question.

#### DUTY SET TO MUSIC.

"Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."—Ps. cxix. 54.

Songs are the symbols of joy, the echoes of a happy heart, vehicles are they through which the soul outpours its gladness on the air. The passage strikes on our attention two very remarkable subjects.

#### I. DUTY SET TO MUSIC.

It is certainly not common for men to exult in law. Responsibility is by no means a subject for song amongst

the generality of mankind. On the contrary, it is felt to be a most repulsive thing. It stands in the soul's horizon a huge and hideous spectre, foreboding mystic woes. Oh! to be free from law, to have no connection whatever with the eternal throne of obligation, but to revel in all the free play of our impulses and passions without being accountable to any established authority! this is perhaps the prevalent feeling of the race. And numbers even of those who not only recognize obligation, but earnestly endeavor to discharge it, who are ranked amongst the religious, do not like it sufficiently to throw it into music and song. Duty, even to them, is a pressure under which they crouch to the dust, not a pinion on which they soar into the ecstasies of the spiritual and divine—a subject about which they groan, never sing. The expression, then, of the Psalmist is confessedly uncommon, and yet it can, I think, be shown to be both *most desirable* and *generally attainable*. First: *It is most desirable*. Two things will show the desirableness of this experience. (1) Law cannot be got rid of, and in moral obligation you are bound by inviolable ties; chains stronger than adamant—chains that the forces



of hell through eternal ages will fail to break—link all souls to the throne of duty. You and duty must ever be together; you can no more flee from it than from yourself. It is the root of your nature. It always confronts you in all its majesty, and says to you in the voice of supreme authority every minute of your conscious life, "*Do this and be happy, neglect it and be damned.*" (2) Your connection with it must either be a source of misery or happiness. It will always be shooting the agony of remorse and self-loathing into the quivering nerves of your nature, and darkening the whole sphere of your being with the frowns of eternal justice, or beaming on your souls the animating and cheering rays of self-commendation and ever-brightening hope. One of these two results is inevitable. This, then, being the case, is not the experience of the Psalmist most *desirable* for all? Since you must live with law, is it not desirable to live with it on friendly terms, to make it a companion that shall be the delight of the soul? Secondly: *It is generally attainable.* The desirability will not be questioned; but can the good be reached? Is there a possibility for men ~~who~~ dread law, and groan

with agony at the shadow of its presence and the sound of its voice, to make it a subject of delight, and the jubilant song of life? It is natural to infer the possibility—(1) From the goodness of the Creator. He is good. His goodness is the root of the universe, the fountain of being, the soul of Himself; and it can never be supposed, therefore, that He linked indissolubly his moral creatures to a system of law that would render them miserable. The opposite is the necessary conclusion. He intended law to guide the footsteps of the soul into the paths of imperishable beauty and immortal bliss. (2) From the conformity of the principles of law with the constitution of the soul. There is nothing in the commands of the law to which reason and conscience do not yield their intuitive response. But granting the possibility of its attainment, the question is *how*? There is but *one* answer, and it is both *simple* and *satisfactory*. It is attained by a *supreme love* to the Lawgiver. If I love a being intensely, the first question of my mind, and the strongest desire of my heart, is to know *what he would have me to do*. When I discover his will, the delight of my heart is to set myself to the working it out.

Aye, though it prove difficult, and involve sacrifices, I shall rejoice in battling with the difficulty, and in making the sacrifice. The more difficult, the more I gratify my love. Love delights in sacrifice. That wish of the suffering child, there prostrate on his little couch, which is felt by the servile servant hard and painful to perform, is attended to by the loving mother with a rapturous delight. It is love to the Lawgiver that changes duty into privilege, and the decalogue into a triumphant psalm. "My meat and my drink is to do the will of my Father who is in heaven." The other remarkable thing which the passage strikes on our attention is—

## II. Duty set to music IN UNFAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.

"Thy statutes have been my songs in *the house of my pilgrimage*." Here in this pilgrim state, with all the discomforts and inconveniences of unsettledness and strangeness, he turns the code of duty into song. And he had good reasons for doing so. First: *Because the sense of duty is our best protection in a world of strangers.* We are pilgrims here surrounded on all hands by men and women of whom we know but little. What is that

which protects our property from their cupidity, our lives from their violence? It is the sense of moral accountability that pervades all classes. Unless men had this they would never feel that slander, theft and murder were crimes. The thief would have no more feeling of wrong than the fox in rifling the cottager of his fowls, and a murderer no more feeling of wrong than the lion in devouring the lamb. No! "thy statutes" are our protection from social wrongs. Civil government would be powerless without this universal sense of responsibility. No system of social order can be based on atheism. Secondly: *Because the sense of duty is our permanent reality in this world of change.* As pilgrims here, we are subject to *perpetual change*. Society around us is changing; the outward world is changing; our bodies, our opinions, and our feelings are changing; but the principle of duty and obligation remains *permanent* and *immutable* within us. It is like a rock in the sea of our souls, remaining the same amidst all ebbings and flowings of our opinions, emotions, and purposes. Duty is fixed as an eternal pole star within us; by it we measure the changes that are going on around us, and by it we can

determine whether our course on the great ocean of life is right and safe or not. Thirdly: *Because the sense of duty is our spiritual power amidst materializing influences.* Matter encanopies and encircles us here in the "house of our pilgrimage." Our tent serves to shut out the rays that shoot from the spiritual. The sense of duty is that power within us which connects us with God and eternity. It is perpetually lifting us up to the great "white throne" of immutable justice and order. Without this power we should lose all impressious as to the nobility of our nature, and be reduced to the common feelings and habits of irrational creatures. Fourthly: *Because the sense of duty, when obeyed, yields the highest delights of our nature.* When duty is obeyed from supreme love to its author, the soul is filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Well, then, might we set duty to music, even in this our "house of pilgrimage." O, come the day when, instead of unholy lusts and amorous wishes, and bloody wars being the songs in the "house of man's pilgrimage," the eternal code of Heaven shall be sung as the soul-inspiring anthem of all!

#### SPIRITUAL WEARINESS, AND ITS ANTIDOTE.

"Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."—Heb. xii. 3.

ELSEWHERE in a few preceding pages will be found a treatment of the first two verses of this chapter. The text presents two subjects for thought.

I. THE LIABILITY OF CHRISTIANS TO SPIRITUAL WEARINESS: "Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." There is a danger of growing weary and faint on the Christian course. This danger arises from a variety of causes. First: *The little advancement we seem to make in spiritual excellence.* We read, we study, we pray, and labor to carry out into life the principles of our religion; but, notwithstanding, we feel ourselves so ignorant, so carnal, so worldly, so morally weak, that we get almost disheartened. Secondly: *The little good we seem to accomplish in all our efforts to serve our fellows.* We labor for their good, we give our best energies to their interest, but after many years' self-denying service, how few show by their lives that they have been benefited. In some

cases the men we have sought to bless have cursed us by the falseness of their professions and the base ingratitude of their conduct. We feel weary when we think of it. Thirdly: *The little difference which Providence in its dispensation makes between us and those who are the enemies of Christ.* Sometimes in truth they seem to be far more favored. The wicked prosper. Asaph felt this, and he lost heart; his foot had almost slipped. Fourthly: *The little influence which our best efforts seem to have in correcting the evils of our age.* The tide of error, impurity, and vice, seems to rise higher, and swell with stronger surge, despite of all our labors. Such things as these tend to make us faint and weary. Like the old Israelites, our souls get discouraged because of the way.

II. THE ANTIDOTE OF CHRISTIANS TO SPIRITUAL WEARINESS: "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." Reflection on Christ will renew our energies, will re-invigorate the soul. First: Consider *what* He endured: "The contradiction of sinners." Mark the conduct of the Scribes, Pharisees, and Saducees; of Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, and the

populace. Secondly: Consider *how* He endured: "When he was reviled, reviled not again." (1 Peter, ii. 23.) Thirdly: Consider *why* He endured: it was not for Himself, but for His enemies.

Reflection on Him will make our greatest trials feel light, and stimulate to labor to overcome even as He overcame.

#### THE QUICKENING WORKS.

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."—John xx. 30, 31.

EVERY man's life may be compared to a book; and every day adds a page to the biography. Notice—

I. THE RECORD. "These are written." First: *The subjects of the record.* The wonderful works and sayings of our Lord. His deeds were such as no human power could accomplish. The miracles of Christ were performed for three special purposes. (1) As acts of humanity. (2) As proofs of His Divinity. (3) As illustrations of the work

of salvation. Their *publicity* is particularly noticed in the text. These "signs" were done "in the *presence* of his disciples." Imposture seeks concealment—works in the dark. But "these things were not done in a corner," but openly—on the stage of public society. The miracle said to every doubter, "Come and see." The *number* of these miracles is also noted. "Many other signs," &c. Not only are the miracles of Christ recorded, but also His *sayings*. With what dignity, authority, and power does He speak, &c. Secondly: *The mode of the record*. It is by writing. "These things are written." The way by which the Divine will has been revealed to mankind, has been by directing and inspiring certain persons to record it in *writing*. Many advantages are derived from this method. There is the advantage of *universality*. A man's writings reach further than his voice. There is the advantage of *appeal*. "To the law and the testimony" we appeal: this is the judge that ends strife. There is the advantage of *security and permanence*. The word uttered, perishes; the letter written, remains. Everything of consequence we desire to have in *writing*. What do we know of ancient history, but by streamlets that

have flowed down to us in books and writings? Let us be thankful, then, for two great blessings; for the Book—the book written in our own tongue—and for an ability to read it. Let all possess the Bible, read it, love it.

II. THE REASON. That "ye might believe." These things are written that ye might believe—First: *In the real existence of Jesus Christ*. Some have been so sceptical as to doubt whether such a person as Jesus Christ ever appeared in the world. They never doubted the historic existence of such men as Julius Cæsar or Mahomet. Have we not higher authority for the existence of Jesus Christ? They are written that you may believe—Secondly: *In the true character of Jesus Christ*. "That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." He came to redeem men from the curse of a violation of law, and to "redeem from all iniquity," &c. The great object is more especially noticed in the next clause of our text, which is—

III. THE RESULT. "And that believing ye might have life," &c. Some write books for pecuniary ends, &c. But the Evangelist wrote without

any view of temporal benefit to himself, but to bring men to Christ and Heaven. That "ye might have life." Not of course animal or even intellectual life, but spiritual and eternal life. We may however form some idea of this spiritual life by thinking of signs and evidences of animal life. There are at least four signs of life, *sensibility, activity,*

*appetite appropriativeness, superiority to gravitating influences.* Have we these signs spiritually?

Take this record, thank God for it. Christ is the substance of it. He is the Gospel, so believe in Him that you may have life—spiritual, ever-growing, ever-blessed, eternal life.

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

#### *The Life of the Millions.*

The lives of the million are like the path which the fool treads out upon the sands. Though there is every facility for a straight course, his way is winding; though surrounded by the grand in nature, his steps are uninspired by holy wonder and reverent awe; and though deep the impress of his foot, his track is no sooner finished than obliteration begins. Wave by wave the tide advances until it wipes out the last footprint, and the great shore of life appears under the shadows of its majestic rocks and the booming of its billows as if no mortal had been there.

#### *The Glowworm a Type.*

The Glowworm shines only for a short time. For a few nights in

the height of summer her beams sparkle on the green leaves in the hedgerows, and strangely charm the wayfarer on his path. Ere autumnal winds sweep the earth her light is extinguished, and the darkness of winter knoweth her not. Nor even in the summer will she shine after the days of her virginity are over. Maternity quenches her brightness and she becomes dim for ever. Strange insect! thou art a type of many a female professor of Christianity, brilliant in the summer of life, but dim and dark in the after seasons. Many a woman in her maidenhood, who appeared radiant in virtues, shining in the path of usefulness, has become clouded and dark with carnality and care in the years of motherhood and age.

#### *Providence.*

Providence is a sea. Men are

pebbles thrown upon the beach in order to be fashioned and polished, by the waves of successive tides, for the majestic temple of eternity. Whilst all are of one nature, some are larger and more rugged than others, and require a longer time and rougher seas to shape them to celestial forms, and brighten them with the hues of immortality.

*The Diving Bell.*

There are men who go down to the depths of the ocean in quest of treasures. The amount of atmospheric air they take with them, to fan their heaving lungs, and keep the wheels of life going, they exhaust in their busy search. Not a particle do they breathe for laughter or for play. They keep down to the utmost limit of their power, and then come up pale and palsied for reviving quaffs of kind

nature's vital air, and then return to their drudgery for gain.

Many professors of religion act like these divers of the deep. Down into the abysses of worldly engagements they go on the Monday in search of wealth, taking with them just so much of the religious element as will keep them alive during the week, whilst the surging waves of commerce roll over their heads. On the Sunday they appear in the house of God worn and wan, pale and prostrate, unfit for holy labor, panting for life.

*Virtue.*

Virtue in the human soul is like vegetation on the sandy hills, it struggles for existence in uncongenial soil; dwarfish is its growth, few are its blossoms, and less its fruit.

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## Theological Notes and Queries.

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### OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

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4.—As Baptismal Regeneration is now a little up in the public mind, and a great many catch-penny sermons have been published on the subject, allow me to ask, is there any Protestant Church besides the Episcopal that teaches such a dogma?—*INQUIRER.*

5.—What is the exact idea that we should attach to the word "justify," when used by the Apostle Paul? Does it mean anything more than to make right? If so, what?—*F. W. C.*

6.—How can you reconcile the

account given of Abraham in Gen. xii. 1, with that contained in Acts vii. 2?—F. R. S.

7.—In Numbers xxii. 5, Balaam is called the son of Beor; but in 2 Peter ii. 15, he is called the son of Bosor. How is this to be accounted for?—PHILO.

8.—Dr. Paley has been severely criticised for defining virtue to be right doing for the sake of future happiness. Looking, however, at the Decalogue and the New Testament, is it not a clear biblical doctrine, whatever conclusions we may have individually formed as to godliness not being the means to an end? "Honor thy father and thy mother, *that thy days may be long.*" Again: St. Paul in writing to the Ephesians, and referring to this commandment, says, "That it may be *well with thee*, and that thou mayest *live long on the earth.*" How is the difficulty

which would exist as to preaching such a doctrine, and its existence on the inspired page, to be reconciled?—FINEM RESPICE.

9.—The fifth commandment is said to be "the first with promise." A preceding one, however, says, "I will show mercy unto thousands that love me and keep my commandments." Is not this a promise?—RENASCENTUR.

10.—In the "Homilist" for September, I find in a *Germ* the following:—"It (the manna) came down in the ark until the temple was plundered by the Babylonians about nine hundred years after." Where is the proof of this statement? I cannot find any record of the pot of manna ever having been put *actually* into the ark; and it is expressly stated in 1 Kings viii. 9, "there was *nothing* in the ark save the two tables of stone."—W. H. COLLIN.

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN WESLEY. By ABEL STEVENS, LL.D. London: William Tegg.

THE author's opening words in his preface we quote at the outset, to indicate the spirit and aims with which he has accomplished this



important literary undertaking. He says:—"As a great religious development of the last century, affecting largely our common Protestantism, and unquestionably destined to affect it still more profoundly, Methodism does not belong exclusively to the denominations which have appropriated its name. I have, therefore, attempted to write its history in a liberal spirit, and to consider it, not as a sectarian, but as a general religious movement ostensibly within the Church of England—at least during the lives of the chief Methodist founders—but reaching beyond it to most of the Protestantism of England and America. I have endeavored steadily to keep this point of view till the movement was reduced into sectarian organizations." This comprehensive plan indicates on the part of the author a sense of historical justice, a spirit of noble catholicity, and a skilfulness in literary arrangement, inasmuch as it affords an opportunity for introducing into the narrative something of the grandest personages and most thrilling movements of England's religious history. The present volume brings the narrative down to the death of Whitfield, and we are informed that two more volumes will complete the work. This history of Methodism is not a work for a class. Methodists will, of course, buy it, peruse it, and revel in it. Protestants, Christians, and Englishmen everywhere, will be deeply interested in the things it contains. Wesley created an epoch in history; and the organization he set on foot, is one of the chief fountain-facts in the life of modern Christendom. Some of the clearest, most refreshing, and life-giving streams that meander through our spheres of life, gush forth from this source.

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WALKER AND WEBSTER COMBINED IN A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. By JOHN LONGMUIR, A.M., LL.D., formerly Lecturer in King's College and University, Aberdeen. London: William Tegg.

WALKER and WEBSTER occupy, perhaps, the highest place in English lexicography. Here, we have the definitions of the former, and the pronunciations of the latter, united in one volume, and brought into conformity to the usage of the present time. It contains, also, many new words, and numerous synonymous terms are carefully discriminated. There is an Appendix to the work, which contains "Walker's Key to the Pronunciation of Scripture, Greek and Latin proper names, and a vocabulary of modern geographical names, together with the explanation of numerous contractions and current phrases from various languages, a concise account of heathen gods and heroes, &c." Nowhere else, within

such a small volume and at such a small price, can such an amount of useful and accurate information be obtained. As an aid to those who wish to master the English language and cultivate English literature, it will prove invaluable. The work, which is executed in a scholarly manner, must have cost the learned editor immense labor.

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CHARACTER AND ITS DEVELOPMENT. By REV. WILLIAM MARSHALL.  
London : Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

THE subject of the work is confessedly an important one. Character is the only earthly production that man can really call his own. It is his, for he made it. Nothing else does he carry with him from the earth into the other state. Houses, lands, gold, wardrobes, and even the body itself, he leaves in the dust ; but character he bears with him into the invisible, the retributive, and the eternal. As is his character, so is he in the spiritual universe, and before a holy God. Out of character, paradise blooms and hell flames. No subject, therefore, can transcend in momentousness that which is the subject of this volume. A thorough philosophic treatment of it, in a godly spirit and for godly ends, showing at the same time the indispensableness of the Gospel to the production of a good one, is one of the greatest *desiderata* in the religious literature of our age. The author has not exactly supplied this ; not because he lacked the capacity—his volume shows the right kind of ability—but because it was manifestly not the precise work he set before himself. He has, notwithstanding, produced a good book. It has the marks of juvenility, not in the sense of weakness, but of freshness, buoyancy, and beauty. The work abounds with thoughts which reach far into the heart of the subject ; the language is clear, chaste, and strong ; and the spirit is loving, modest, and reverent.

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SONGS IN SORROW AND SONGS OF JOY. By C. H. J. London :  
Nisbet & Co.

WE cannot say that we have an exalted idea of the poetry of this volume. It may be, however, first-class notwithstanding. We sometimes think we have neither the poetic eye or ear. Mrs. Browning is, undoubtedly, a first-class poet : the highest bardic genius was hers. Tennyson, too, of course sits amongst the royalties of his order : and yet *we cannot see the beauty or catch the music of all the effusions of either.*

We have seen even intellectual "Dundrearys" of both sexes dancing with enthusiasm to some passages from these poets, that we could not for the life of us understand. We must, therefore, lack that poetic nerve which is necessary to feel the highest ring of genius. So that when we say we see little or no poetry in these songs, our readers must think of our acknowledged incapacity. The design of the writer is good, although, we think, the theology is often bad, and the spirit sometimes mawkish.

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THE RELIGIOUS ANNALS OF BRENTWOOD. By REV. H. P. BOWEN.  
London: John Wesley.

THIS is the second edition of a work to which we called the attention of our readers sometime ago, and it contains many interesting incidents not found in the former edition. We extract a paragraph to show the style and spirit of the author:—"By means of history, the events of the past are retained; by the records of antiquity, we call back departed ages, and in thought have them over again. We delight in perusing the history of the world at large, still more, the history of our country; but most of all that of the town or locality in which we live, which is our home. Events that have transpired in our own town centuries ago, are full of interest to us all. All history is instructive, but especially the history of religion. The facts connected with the worship of our ancestors, are most attractive to the devout mind. The religious annals of the past should arrest our attention: we should study them so closely as to understand them. By this means we may see their influence upon the present, and their bearing upon the future of our country. Every town has some event worthy of commemoration; almost every village has some name that deserves to be rescued from oblivion. Our own town is no exception to the general rule. There are many incidents connected with Brentwood worthy of record, some names that will be held in everlasting remembrance." The volume is fraught with most interesting facts, arranged with literary skill, and recorded in a diction lucid and nervous.

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A VOICE IN ALL THE CHURCHES. London: Morgan & Chase.

WE scarcely know what to say about this tract: it abounds with disclosures of Church diseases and descriptions of the recipes. There is a deal of strong sense in it and the feeling is by no means acrimonious. The purpose, too, is undoubtedly honest and kind. Ministers of all denominations would do well to read it.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Dreams ;—their Philosophy and Uses.

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“For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in alumberings upon the bed ; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.”—Job xxxiii. 14—17.



OUR subject, whilst it has some difficulties that master our intelligence, has also aspects suggestive of some important spiritual truths. An accurate verbal description of all the variety of dreams, if possible, would be superfluous. All dream, and each knows what a dream is better than he can be told. There are writers who give us elaborate descriptions of the clouds of heaven ; but the clouds are far more grand and wonderful as we see them in endless numbers swell and shrink, brighten and blacken in the sky, than they appear as descriptions in a book. So with dreams. They are more wonderful on the troubled sky of a man's soul at night, than they are in the depictments of any speaker or writer. They come in every shape, form, and hue. In attitudes fantastic and grotesque, they chase each other with rapidity through the firmament of the soul ; and then melt away into nothingness. Often—

“Dim and faint as the mists that break  
At sunrise from a mountain lake.”

We cannot describe them. All we shall do, is to say a word on their *philosophy* and *uses*.

I. THEIR PHILOSOPHY. Various theories have been propounded in order to account for them, but none have been found equal to a full explanation of all their various types. I have no new theory to offer; I have discovered no key to unlock the mystery. Two questions remain open for discussion.

First: *What originates the dream.* What, when the man is "lapped in the soft oblivion of unconsciousness," when the body is still as death in sleep, starts the mind into action? The probability is, that there are more causes than one—that different kinds of dreams have different causes. The cause of some dreams may be found in the state of the body at the time. Aristotle considered that every object of sense produced upon the soul certain impressions, which it made after the senses had closed, and that the perceptive faculty of the mind, recognizing these impressions, woke the mind up to its dream-work. Many examples have been given in confirmation of this opinion. Dr. Gregory relates, that having occasion to put a bottle of hot water to his patient at bed time, he dreamed he was walking up Mount Etna, and found the ground insufferably hot. Dr. Reid, having had a blister applied to his head, dreamed that he was being scalped by a party of Indians. Such instances as these, perhaps, agree with the experiences of most, and show that the state of the body often originates the dream. The cause of other dreams may be found in something that has made more than ordinary impression on the mind. "A dream," says the wise man, "cometh from a multitude of business."

"In sleep, when fancy is let loose to play,  
Our dreams repeat the wishes of the day."

That which has pleased or pained us most—filled us with most anxious thoughts in the day—fancy, uncontrolled, reproduces in the visions of the night. It was thus with

Pilate's wife. Thoughts of Jesus of Nazareth, which filled Jerusalem, had anxiously occupied her mind in her waking hours, and these thoughts gave her most troublesome visions in sleep, so that in the morning, we hear her address her husband thus—"Have thou nothing to do with that just man : for I have suffered many things this day in a dream." Hence dreams are generally retrospective—they are shadows of past events. Like lanterns in a vessel's stern, they throw light upon the track we have cut through the sea of life. The cause of other dreams has been traced to supernatural influence. The ancient heathens regarded them as the production of separate spirits acting upon the human soul in sleeping hours. Baxter, amongst other eminent Christian thinkers, believed in this. There is nothing absurd in it. Are not the spirits of all the generations that have ever lived, living still? May they not be ever hovering around our path and crowding the air we breathe? Do not those who once knew and loved us feel an interest in us still; and is not the soul in sleep more detached from the material world, and more allied with the spiritual than when awake? We know that their forms often flit before us, and may it not be that sometimes they softly touch some spring of the soul which sets the whole mystic machine to work? The other question open to discussion is—

Secondly: *Why do thoughts take such grotesque forms in dreams?* Images often appear to the mind in dreams that are unknown in waking hours, that have nothing like them in the great world of reality. Objects appear, the like of which Heaven has never created. Events occur which never could take place without reversing the laws of the universe. Why are the mind's conceptions so different in the night to the day? Why is the whole scenery of the soul so changed, its heaven and earth so different? I only suggest a reason, it is this. *The mind in sleep is left uncontrolled by the will.* The human mind is subject to what are called laws of association, laws by which one thought is made to rise by necessity out of another, as seed from seed. If the thought is of an unnatural

kind, it will go on producing the unnatural and the monstrous. In our waking hours these laws themselves are controlled by the WILL. In my waking hours I think as I will, I think upon this subject or that in this connexion or that. By my will I crush a wrong or absurd thought in its germ, and by my will I originate others of an opposite and higher class. But in sleep, this will has resigned her sovereignty; the queen herself is sleeping, and lawless fancy has taken the throne. In dreams the mind is left like a vessel without a rudder. The laws of association heave her about in all directions like the swelling tide, and the stormy wind. If a wrong thought comes up in the day, by my will I can crush it as a monster, but in sleep the will is powerless, and from the fathomless depths of the mind, monster rises from monster unchecked and uncontrolled.

Passing from these questions concerning their philosophy, let us notice—

II. THEIR USES. Have dreams no serviceable purpose? Answer they no useful end? Coming upon us, as they do, by almost the necessity of our nature, and engaging so much of our spiritual energies, the goodness of my Maker binds me to believe that they are serviceable in some way or other. What though they—

“Are the children of an idle brain,  
Begot of nothing, but vain fantasy.”

Still they must have some good end to answer. The mists that overhang the hills, and the vapours that curl in the breeze, are of some service in the economy of nature. And can it be that those fantasies of the soul are good for nothing? All analogy unites with creative goodness to say no. What are their probable uses?

First: *They serve to throw some light on our spiritual constitution.* Few things throw more light on the nature and the power of the soul than its own dreams. (1) *They show the soul's power for involuntary action.* By involuntary

action, we mean action in which the will is not concerned, where it has not been consulted, over which it has no control. There are two kinds of involuntary action, one is right. In obvious peril we involuntarily seek safety ; in the presence of axiomatical truths we involuntarily believe ; in the view of the truly beautiful we involuntarily admire and love. All this we do, not by volition, but by intuition. In heaven, where all are holy in the deepest fountains of their being, and springs of their activity, involuntary action is, perhaps, the rule, and always blessed. But there is an involuntary action that is wrong. It arises from a thorough infirmity of the will, through the indulgence of the passions and long habits of sin. Alas, how many there are who, through a sinful course of life, have lost the "I will" of their being ; that have become the thorough creatures of old associations and habits ; no argument can change their opinion ; no persuasion their conduct. They are borne on resistlessly by the river of their own thoughts, prejudices, and indulgences. They cannot stop ; the will is gone. This power of involuntary action is a terrible power of the soul. Hast thou thought of it, brother ? Dreams show that thou hast it ? It is a power that can make thee miserable in spite of thyself. They serve to show—(2) The soul's power for vivid realization. In dreams the spirit sees the objects with all the vividness of reality. Persons, dead long ago, are seen, and heard, and felt, as if they were in contact with us in our waking hours. In truth, more so. When awake, we see outward objects through our sensations ; but the objects that come to us in dreams we see *directly* face to face. Gardens, bowers, lakes, streams, oceans, mountains, cities, men, women ; in dreams they are always powerfully real. A trial is seldom more distressing to the soul than when it looms in a dream ; an enemy seldom more terrible to us than when he walks the chambers of the soul in the visions of the night. The deepest thrills of the soul are often felt at what we see and hear in dreams. Speaking of a dreaming man, our great dramatist has said,—



"Thy spirit within thee hath been so at war,  
And thus hath so bestirr'd thee in thy sleep,  
That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow,  
Like bubbles in a late disturbed stream :  
And in thy face strange motions have appeared ;  
Such as we see when men restrain their breath  
On some great sudden haste."

Wonderful power of the soul is this. It wakes the dead ; it brings the distant near ; and out of its own thoughts plants a paradise, or kindles a hell. They serve to show—(3) The soul's power of rapid movement. Times and distances are nothing to the soul in dreams. It coasts round the earth, and darts through the centuries in an instant. Departed men are present, and converse with us. Events long since past are transpiring at the moment. We are in scenes a thousand leagues away. We paint our life in an instant ; we do the world's business in an hour. Wonderfully rapid is the mind's movement in dreams. Sir Benjamin Brodie mentions the following anecdote of the late Lord Holland :—"On an occasion, when he was much fatigued, while listening to a friend who was reading aloud, he fell asleep, and had a dream ; the particulars of which it would occupy him a quarter of an hour, or longer, to express in writing. After he woke, he found that he remembered the beginning of one sentence, which he actually heard, and the latter part of the sentence immediately following it, so that, probably, the whole time during which he had slept, did not occupy more than a few seconds." Dr. Carpenter, also, mentions the case of a clergyman falling asleep in his pulpit during the singing of the psalm before the sermon, and awakening with the conviction that he must have slept for at least an hour, and that the congregation must have been waiting for him, but on referring to his psalm-book, he was consoled by finding that his slumber had lasted not longer than during the singing of a single line. Not half the things we see and do in dreams, do we remember. The mind in sleep, like Saturn, devours many of its children as soon as they are born. The rapidity of the mind's movement in sleep

significantly hints to us, of that incalculable expertness of action which will mark its history in eternity. They serve to show—(4) The soul's power of incorporeal action. In dreams the bodily senses are closed; yet the soul sees and hears, tastes, smells and feels. It sees without the eye, hears without the ear, works without the hands, walks without the feet, talks without the tongue. It often reasons, too, most accurately in sleep. Many men in sleep have solved problems which mastered them in the day; have written, as in the case of Coleridge, lines of poetry which transcended their genius when awake. Dr. Abercrombie relates that an eminent lawyer had been consulted respecting a case of great difficulty and importance, and after several days of intense attention to the subject, he got up in his sleep and wrote a long paper. The following morning he told his wife that he had had a most interesting dream, and that he would give anything to recover the train of thought which had then passed through the mind. She directed him to his writing-desk, where he found his opinion clearly and fully written out. This power of the soul to act thus independently of the body is, to say the least, an argument in favor of its immateriality, and a prophecy of its capabilities to fulfil its high destiny when the body is dust. Paul's language on the subject is full of meaning, "I knew a man in Christ," &c. Dreams serve to show—(5) The soul's power of moral character. The moral character of the soul, that is, its controlling likes and dislikes, determines the character of our dreams. He whose moral heart is engrossed in sensual gratifications, worldly gains and amusements, will have dreams corresponding to that state of mind. On the other hand, he whose mind is mainly engrossed with spiritual and Divine things, will have dreams of a religious and elevating character. Sir Thomas Brown has well said "that persons of radical integrity will not be easily perverted in their dreams; nor noble minds do pitiful things in their sleep." If the moral current of the soul flows in the channel of the chaste, the honest, and the godly, it will not mirror images of

uncleanness, dishonesty, or sin. The moral heart is the fountain of all our activities, both asleep and awake; if that fountain be clean, every streamlet will be crystal.

If dreams throw all this light upon the wonderful nature which God has given us, are they not useful; are not the ends they answer worth having? Ought we not to be thankful to heaven for the power to form visions in the night? Another great use—

Secondly: *They are sometimes the organs of Divine communication.* In olden times dreams were the media through which God was pleased to communicate His thoughts to men. "If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." (Num. xii. 6.) God revealed Himself in a dream to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, and others. Some of those dreams we shall have to examine in future homilies. Why He made communications of Himself to man through dreams is a question beyond our solution. Was it because the soul in sleep is more removed from the material and nearer to the spiritual than when awake? or was it that the soul asleep can hear and observe wonders which in waking hours would paralyze it with terror and awe? We know not. We know the fact, and we desire to acquiesce in the arrangement, and say, "Even so, Father, it seemeth good."

But are dreams organs of Divine communication now? or where they only employed so in remote ages, and in eastern lands? Were the men mentioned in the Bible the only men thus honored? Reason would suggest that God has still intercourse with human minds—in dreams of the night, and in visions of the day. Is the Infinite Father less interested in the men of this generation than in those of the past? Do we stand in less need of communications of Him than those to whom of old He spoke? Or are we less accessible to His approaches? By no means. Hence there is nothing inconsistent in reason, in the thought that God has communications with some men now in dreams. And then, too, there is much

the experience of some men that tends to attest the fact. There have been men in every age, and almost in every clime, who have had dreams prognosticating with singular accuracy future events, and resulting in issues of high ritual importance. Instances abound where dreams have been the means of converting wicked men, and of guiding and succouring the good in scenes of perplexity and distress, in the cases of Colonel Gardiner and Africana recorded by Fiat. I select two from many, that seem to carry with them proofs of their Divine origin; the one indicating a knowledge of future events more than human, and the other issuing in results the most blessed and Divine. Both are well authenticated. The late Rev. Mr. Bowden, of Darwin, relates the following dream, which he wrote down as he received it from the lips of the clergyman whose dream it is:—"A clergyman, exhausted with the public duties of the day morning and afternoon, retired to his apartment for an hour's sleep in order to refresh him for the services of the evening. In his sleep, he dreamt that he entered his garden, and went down in his bower there to read and meditate. While thus employed, he heard a footstep approaching—he went forth to meet the visitor. The visitor was a brother clergyman of brilliant talents, and wondrously popular. His countenance was covered with a gloom of sadness, and his features indicated great agitation of soul. His distressed clerical visitor asked him the time of day, to which he replied, twenty-five minutes past four. On hearing this he exclaimed, 'It is only one hour since I died, and here I am, damned!' 'Damned!' said the other, 'for what?' 'It is not,' said the visitor, 'because I have not preached the Gospel, nor because I have not been useful, but because I have sought the praise of men rather than of God, and I have my reward.' On hearing this, the minister woke from his sleep with the awful truth pressing on his heart. He went forth to his church to conduct the evening service. On his way, he was accosted by a man who inquired whether he had heard of the severe loss the church had sustained in the death of their minister. He

replied, 'No,' and inquired the day and the hour when the event took place. The reply was, 'This afternoon at twenty-five minutes past three o'clock.' I accept this fact; you take it for what it is worth. The other is a dream which a father had, and which led to the conversion of several of his children. "In January last," said a pious father in writing to his friends, "I dreamed that the day of judgment was come. I saw the Judge on His great white throne, and all nations were gathered before Him. My wife and I were on the right hand, but I could not see my children. I said, 'I cannot bear this, I must go and seek them.' I went to the left hand of the Judge, and there found them all standing in the utmost despair. As soon as they saw me they caught hold of me, and cried, 'Oh! father, we will never part!' I said, 'My dear children, I am come to try, if possible, to get you out of this awful situation!' So I took them all with me; but when we came near the Judge, I thought He cast an angry look, and said, 'What do thy children with thee now? They would not take thy warning when on earth, and they shall not share with thee the crown in heaven; depart, ye cursed!' At these words I awoke, bathed in tears. Awhile after this, as we were all sitting together on a Sabbath evening, I related to them my dream. No sooner did I begin, than first one, and then another, yea, all of them, burst into tears, and God fastened conviction on their hearts. Five of them are rejoicing in God their Saviour; and I believe the Lord is at work with the other two; so that I doubt not He will give them, also, to my prayers." Thus, "in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."

The subject teaches that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. How great the soul. Brother, what are things about thee compared to thy soul? Close thy senses, and shut out the material universe. Thou hast still a world within thee. Thy soul is independent of that materialism in which thou art

living, and which hems thee round about. When thy body is motionless in sleep, it can tread the shores of Tartarus, and pace the bowers of Paradise.

"The mind can make  
Substance, and people planets of its own  
With beings brighter than have been, and give  
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh."

Once in the revolution of every twenty-four hours that soul of thine breaks away from the material, and holds fellowship with its own spiritual creations, in order to remind thee that it will soon break away from the material altogether, leave thy body to rot in the dust, and spend eternity amidst the wonders of a world of spirits. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" What? Nothing. To lose the soul is to lose the universe, to lose God, to lose all that can render existence aught but an eternal curse.

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its WIDEST truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archaeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION FIFTEENTH.—Acts v. 33—42.

"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them. Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; and said unto

them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody ; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves : who was slain ; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him : he also perished ; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone : for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought : but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed, and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not, to teach and preach Jesus Christ."—Acts v. 33—42.

SUBJECT :—*The Speech of Gamaliel to the Sanhedrim.*

**W**E have four things in this narrative that are worth looking at :—Good oratory neutralized by a corrupt audience ; culpable indifference justifying itself by plausible logic ; a rule for testing systems by which the divinity of Christianity is established ; and an example of the unconquerable spirit of genuine religion. Here we have—

I. GOOD ORATORY NEUTRALIZED BY A CORRUPT AUDIENCE. The storm of opposition to the apostles was raging furiously in the Sanhedrim, when one, the most illustrious, of their number stands up to moderate its violence. We have his address here, and in it there are several things which show its rhetorical power.

First : *The ability and position of the speaker.* "A Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people." The name Gamaliel was an old historic name, honorable in Israel. He was the son of Simeon, who took Jesus in his arms in the temple, and the grandson of Hillel, both famous Jewish doctors. The exalted title of *Rabban* was conferred on him on account of his great wisdom and reputation. He had been at one time the president of

the Sanhedrim, and at his feet the great apostle of the Gentiles studied. A most popular man in the state, too, was he. "He was had in reputation among all the people." Such a speaker's high character and reputation would give weight to his oratory. The speech of a man whose ability has not yet been recognized, and whose reputation is yet to be made, would not carry with it half the power, in an audience, of words not half so weighty in wisdom falling from the lips of him who has won a "high reputation among all the people." The force of a speech on the minds of the hearers is greatly regulated by the place the speaker holds in their judgment and esteem. Gamaliel's speech, therefore, would have this rhetorical advantage. Another thing here which shows the oratoric power of Gamaliel's address is—

Secondly: *The course he recommended.* Had he urged on their acceptance some abstruse proposition, or recommended to them a course of action involving great difficulties and dangers, one need not have wondered at the ineffectiveness of his address; but the course he recommended was most reasonable, and most easy: "refrain from these men and let them alone." A most common-sense course to pursue under the circumstances. There is yet another thing which shows the rhetorical power of Gamaliel's address—

Thirdly: *The argument he employed.* "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." His argument was—(1) If the movement was *undivine*, opposition was *unnecessary*; it would come to naught of itself. In support of this he does two things, he gives facts and he states a principle. The facts are two; one referring to Theudas, the other to Judas of Galilee. "For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed." Who



were these two rioters? This Theudas is not to be confounded with the Theudas mentioned by Josephus.\*

Judas of Galilee is also mentioned by Josephus. After Archelaus (Matt. ii. 22) was deposed from the government, and Judæa was reduced to a Roman province, in the reign of Augustus, a census or enrolment, called taxing in the text, was taken by Quirinus or Cyrenius, president of Syria, to which

\* Theudas was a name quite common among the Jews. Of this man, nothing more is known than is here recorded. Josephus (Antiq. 622, chap. v.) mentions one Theudas, in the time of Fadus, the procurator of Judæa, in the reign of the emperor Claudius (A.D. 45 or 46), who persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with him, and to follow him to the river Jordan. He told them he was a prophet, and that he would divide the river and lead them over. Fadus, however, came suddenly upon them, and slew many of them. Theudas was taken alive and conveyed to Jerusalem, and there beheaded. But this occurred at least ten or fifteen years after this discourse of Gamaliel. Many efforts have been made to reconcile Luke and Josephus, on the supposition that they refer to the same man. Lightfoot supposed that Josephus had made an error in chronology. But there is no reason to suppose that there is reference to the same event; and the fact that Josephus has not recorded the insurrection referred to by Gamaliel, does not militate at all against the account in the Acts. For—(1) Luke, for anything that appears to the contrary, is quite as credible an historian as Josephus. (2) The name Theudas, was a common name among the Jews, and there is no improbability that there were two leaders of an insurrection of this name. If it is improbable, the improbability would affect Josephus' credit as much as that of Luke. (3) It is altogether improbable that Gamaliel should refer to a case which was not well authenticated, and that Luke should record a speech of this kind unless it was delivered, when it would be easy to detect the error. (4) Josephus has recorded many instances of insurrection and revolt. He has represented the country as in an unsettled state, and by no means professes to give an account of all that occurred. Thus he says (Antiq. xviii. x. 4) that there were "at this time ten thousand other disorders in Judæa," and (8) that "Judæa was full of robberies." When this Theudas lived, cannot be ascertained; but as Gamaliel mentions him before Judas of Galilee, it is probable that he lived not far from the time that our Saviour was born—at a time when many false prophets appeared, claiming to be the Messiah. *Boasting himself to be somebody.* Claiming to be an eminent prophet, probably, or the Messiah. *Obeded him.* The word used here, is the one commonly used to denote belief. As many as believed on him, or gave credit to his pretensions.

Judæa was attached. This Judas became a ringleader of a rebellion against it. This revolt was the beginning of difficulties, which ran on accumulating until Jerusalem and the nation were destroyed in the great war of Titus. This Judas and all his followers, we are told here, perished. Gamalie wished the Sanhedrim to understand that if the cause of the apostles was undivine and merely human, they would perish just like this Theudas and Judas. Having stated these facts, he lays down a principle, which is, *that the human would perish, the Divine flourish*. "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." The argument is *ad hominem* designed to show that his hearers, on their own principles, were bound to take the course he recommended. They professed to regard the new religion as an undivine thing. They need not therefore go to the trouble of opposing it; on their own view of it, it would soon die. Another part of the argument is (2) If the movement was of God opposition would be *futile and impious*. "If it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." Attempts to crush the cause of God are as futile as attempts to roll back the tides of ocean, or reverse the revolution of planets—worse than futile, it is fighting against God; a mad and impious battling against the Infinite. Another thing which shows the power of his oratory is—

Fourthly: *The impression he produced*. "And to him they agreed." Their judgments went with him. They could not but see the reasonableness of the course he recommended, and feel the force of the arguments he employed.

So far Gamaliel's speech seems powerful, and one might have thought that he would have gained his end, and brought his audience practically to his conclusions. But no, they pursued their course of persecution. "When they had called the Apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." Now the question is, what rendered this man's oratory so ineffective? *It was the character of his audience*. Prejudice

warped their judgment, and malice inspired their hearts. So it ever is. What boots a good speaker or a good speech, if the minds of the hearers are pre-occupied with hostile opinions and feelings. The rhetoric of a discourse greatly depends upon the mind of the auditory. Hence what is felt to be eloquence in one *audience*, would not be in another. He is the most eloquent man in his sphere who echoes the views and advocates the wishes of his audience. The man who propounds opinions, not agreeing with the general views of his listeners, though he reasons with the logic of Aristotle, and declaims with the power of Demosthenes, will not be felt eloquent. Paul himself was a babbler at Athens. This fact is fraught with lessons both to hearers and to speakers. Let hearers who would benefit from the discourses of the men they hear, free their minds from prejudices, and listen with candour; and let speakers despise that eloquence that comes rather from the low tastes and narrow views and sectarian sympathies of a spiritually-degraded audience, than from the true thoughts and honest arguments and noble motives of a speaker inspired with the truth of God.

Here we have—

II. CULPABLE INDIFFERENCE JUSTIFYING ITSELF BY PLAUSIBLE LOGIC. The course of *non-intervention* which this orator recommends to the Sanhedrim may, perhaps, in some aspects, admit of justification. On the ground for example of *statesmanship*, the policy he recommends might be defended. Earthly rulers have no right to interfere with the religious opinions and movements of the people, so long as there is no infringement of the rights of others. Free thought and action in spiritual matters is the inalienable right of every man; the empire of conscience is sacred to God. Men are permitted to step into it for purposes of argument, but not to legislate or coerce. Or supposing that Gamaliel believed that the cause which the apostles were enthusiastically promoting was not *divine*, a mere superstition or imposture, the policy he recommends might be justified

on the ground of *social philosophy*. The way to give an impulse and a social power to error, is to persecute its votaries. Many an error which would have died at its birth has been nursed into power by harshness and cruelty. Storms of persecution have nursed the absurdest systems into empires, and so they ever will. They are the breath that the devil breathes to inspire and strengthen his own.

But looking at the conduct of Gamaliel and the policy he recommends here in a broad human light, he develops a most reprehensible moral indifference—(1) Because, as a man, he was morally bound to satisfy himself whether the apostles' cause was that of man, or of God. He was not justified in allowing it to remain an hypothesis. By an honest investigation he should have satisfied himself on the question before he presumed to give any advice. (2) Because he had abundant evidence to satisfy himself on the question. The marvels that Jesus of Nazareth had wrought must have been known to him, as a member of the great Council of the nation. The miracles of His death and resurrection too; moreover, the wonders of the Pentecost, which had just occurred, were present to his mind; a thousand voices had told him that the work was the work of God. (3) Because, if it was the work of God, it was his bounden obligation to go heart and soul and hand with it. We cannot therefore but regard his argument, as formulated, as an apology for his indifference. In this respect Gamaliel is the type of a large class in every age. Their policy is to allow things to take their course, and settle themselves. They will not concern themselves with the truth or falsehood of things, in order to shape their conduct in relation to them. They allow the whole to remain an hypothesis: it is all "*if*." This is a state as criminal as it is perilous. It is the duty of every man to whom Christianity presents itself, to settle at once in his own mind the question of its divinity. Of all questions it is the most vital and urgent, and it should not be left a moment in doubt.

*Here we have—*

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III. A RULE FOR TESTING SYSTEMS BY WHICH THE DIVINITY OF CHRISTIANITY IS ESTABLISHED. The rule is, that what is divine will flourish. "If it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." We accept this rule, and by it we prepare to test the claims of Christianity to divinity. "Since the Gospel," to use the language of another, "has not been overthrown, but has gone on conquering and to conquer, from age to age, and was never so great a power as at this day, we infer, conversely to the proposition of Gamaliel, that it is of God, and never can be overthrown. It is true, that false systems of religion have spread far and wide, and flourished long in the earth. But they have often relied upon the sword for their extension and perpetuity. They have, too, made a compromise with the passions, and not demanded the pure morals of the Christian system. They have also fallen into perversions and corruptions, from which they could not recover, being destitute of the conservative and self-recuperative energy of the Gospel. Our holy faith has been attacked by every species of foe, open and concealed : by the arm of the persecutor, and the argument of the philosopher : by the doubts of the ignorant, and the sneers of the witty. But it has come forth brighter and purer from every furnace in which it has been tried. It still lives ; it prevails by moral suasion ; it fills the world. Cities and empires rise and fall, but this kingdom endureth throughout all generations." Napoleon Bonaparte remarks, in a conversation related by his friend Count de Montholon, "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne and myself, founded empires ; but on what foundation did we rest the creations of our genius ? Upon *force*. Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon *love* ; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him. His eternal kingdom is proclaimed, loved, and adored, and is extending over the whole earth."

Here we have—

IV. AN EXAMPLE OF THE UNCONQUERABLE SPIRIT OF GENUINE RELIGION. This we have in the conduct of the apostles. "And when they had beaten them, they commanded

that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Observe two things—

First: *Their exultation in ignominious suffering.* "They were beaten." The word here used, which properly means flaying, denotes the severest kind of scourging. It was a punishment regarded as peculiarly disgraceful (*τιμωρία αλοχίτην*, as Josephus calls it). The usual number of lashes was thirty-nine. (2 Cor. xi. 24.) Thus dishonored, and with bleeding wounds, they left the Council, not dejected by grief not saddened in spirit, but *rejoicing that they were counted worthy.* The ignominy they counted honor. This is an experience which can scarcely be explained to those who have it not. The following things may help to account for this sublime feeling. (1) A consciousness of rectitude. (2) A supreme affection for Christ, for whose cause they suffered. It is the law of love to rejoice in suffering for its object. (3) A recollection that their Master suffered in the same way. He was scourged and reviled. (4) A fresh assurance of their genuine interest in Christ. He had told them that they should thus suffer. Matt. v. 11, 12; x. 17—22. Such things as these enabled them to glory in tribulation Observe—

Secondly: *Their invincibility in prohibited labor.* Though charged with awful threats by the council not to speak in the name of Jesus, they marched forward in their mission with indomitable heroism. "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." No power on earth could break down their holy purpose. They set all human authority at defiance.



## Gems of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*The Descension of Christ and the Ascension of His Church.*

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”—1 Thess. iv. 16—18.

Analysis of Family the Six Hundred and Sixty-ninth.

**T**HE Thessalonian Church were, it would seem, under a twofold misapprehension. One was that the final advent of Christ was just at hand. They expected His return while they were yet “alive on the earth.” In truth, the impression that Jesus would soon appear, prevailed extensively through all the Churches founded by the apostles, nor is it certain to me, that the apostles themselves did not participate in this sentiment. “Yet a little while,” says Paul, “and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” The prevalence of such an impression in the apostolic period, is scarcely to be wondered at. Christ Himself had frequently spoken of His coming as an event not far distant. Of all objects in the universe, He was the dearest to their hearts. He was fresh in their memory, for He had only just departed. Many had seen Him before His death ; not a few in the glory of His resurrection body. All heard wonderful things about Him from those who had seen Him. It was natural therefore for their love to desire His speedy return, and what their love desired they readily believed in. Our creeds have their root in the heart, our wishes formulate the tenets of our faith.

The other misapprehension was that the Christians who departed this life previous to His return, would not have advantages equal to those who would be living on

the earth. Those who would be living here when that glorious event occurred, they seemed to feel, would be privileged above all others. Their hearts would thrill to the first distant sounds that would herald His approach, and leap with ecstasy at the first streaks of splendor in the sky, foretelling His triumphal advent. But the departed, they thought, would have no share in this. They would be sleeping unconsciously in their beds of dust, while they were enjoying the raptures of the scene. This heightened their sorrow when one after another of their Christian brethren departed. Though, perhaps, they had no doubt of the coming resurrection, and the ultimate happiness of the departed, they felt that they would be serious losers by dying before the glorious return of their Redeemer. Now, in the context, the apostle endeavors to comfort them under their bereavements by removing this misapprehension. "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." As if the apostle had said, do not sorrow under the impression that the departed will have no share in the glories of the second advent; they will come with Him: they will be as alive to the sublime interests of that period as you will be. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." The word "*prevent*" here, does not mean what the word means with us now. Like many other words in our language, it has changed its meaning since our translators did their noble work. With us now it means hinder, obstruct. But here it means *precede*, *anticipate*,—*prævenio*. The idea of the apostle therefore is, that those who will be living when Christ appears, will not go before or precede them which have departed. There will be no precedence; they will be on equal terms.

The text leads us to consider two points, the descending of Christ, and the ascending of Christians.



I. THE DESCENDING OF CHRIST. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The descending of Christ is here spoken of in terms the most unequivocal and positive. It is the language of a man who himself had not the slightest doubt upon the subject, and who felt that it was too generally accepted by the men to whom he wrote to require any argument. "*Shall descend.*" Indeed, our Lord's teaching on the subject had been so clear and full as to preclude almost the possibility of any doubt on the point. (Matt. xiii. 36, xvi. 27, xxiv. 30 ; John xiv. 3.) The two angels who addressed the wondering disciples as their Master ascended, also spoke in such a way upon the subject as to place it beyond debate, at least amongst the first Christians. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you to heaven." No wonder, therefore, that the apostles do not argue the subject, but assume it as one of the most settled things in their creed. Two thoughts are suggested as to His descending.

First : It will be *personal*. "The Lord *himself*." He will come—not a vision of Him, not a representative. He will appear, not as earthly monarchs sometimes appear, by a delegated substitute ; but "the Lord *himself*." "This same Jesus." The same in character, immaculately pure, incorruptibly true, infinitely loving ; the same in person, the God-man ; but the man-nature, not as during the days of His flesh, poor, dejected, mangled, groaning, dying, densely clouding the Divine, but happy, triumphant, radiating all the perfections of the Godhead. "The Lord himself shall descend." He has not forgotten the earth. Ten thousand ages, amidst the glories of universal empire, lessen not His interest in earth. He will visit it again. *Whence* will He descend ? I know not how high His throne is. "He is exalted far above all heavens." *When* will He descend ? It is not for you to know "the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Another thought as to His descending is—

Secondly : It will be glorious. "With a shout, with the

voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." What do these words mean? The word *shout* (κελεύσμαι) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means a burst of excitement, an outcry. What voices make up that shout! What a universe of feeling will be thrown into that outcry? "*With the voice of the archangel.*" In the angelic universe there is a vast gradation—rank rising above rank—the archangel and the chief angel stand at the head of all, next to God Himself. What his *voice* can be, who can tell? It will not be an unmeaning voice, or an unmusical voice. It will convey wonderful things in the melodious cadences of eternity. "*And with the trump of God.*" The trump of God! What is that? Is it put here as a mere rhetorical ornamentation, meaning nothing? Paul is too solemn in mood to deal in rhetorical flourishes. By God's appointment a trumpet was used of old to summon His people to their solemn convocation. (Num. x. 3, 10, 21.) That trumpet was intended, perhaps, as a faint emblem of some tremendous organ through which the Almighty Himself would speak. When the Almighty came down on Sinai, there was not only heard the roar of the thunder and the quaking of the earth, but the "voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled." "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised."

Such is the brief but striking description which Paul gives here of our Lord's descent. It accords with representations which are given elsewhere. (Matt. xvi. 27; Rev. xiv. 14.) The text leads us to consider—

II. THE ASCENDING OF CHRISTIANS. "Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Observe two things—

First: *The state from which they ascend.* All the millions of the good, all the numbers that make up the true Church do not ascend from exactly the same position. (1) Some from the *realm of death*. "The dead in Christ shall arise first." The

word "first" here does not mean first in relation to the wicked. The apostle does not mean to say that the good shall rise before the wicked; that may be a truth or not. What he means is, that the sainted dead shall rise before the sainted living are changed. He states this for the purpose to which we have already referred, namely, to correct the error that the departed will suffer loss by leaving the world prior to the advent of Christ. So far from that being the case, Paul says, they shall rise *first*. What millions upon millions will ascend from the realms of the dead! "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." (2) Some from the *spheres of the living*. "We which are alive and remain." There will be some alive here when Christ comes. All men will not be mortal. An age will dawn on this planet when the generation will defy death. What will be the population of the globe when Christ appears? I know not. Probably the largest that has ever been found on the earth before. "Those which are alive and remain shall be caught up." A change will take place in them, by which their bodies will become incorruptible and immortal, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

Such is the state from which the disciples of Christ will ascend. Some from the realms of the dead, and some from the spheres of the living; from the various pursuits and avocations of this mundane state. Observe—

Secondly: *The state to which they ascend.* "They will be caught up together with them in the clouds," &c. The expression "caught up" expresses the application of an external force, that force is the force of God. Clouds here mean *crowds*. The definite article should be omitted, it is not in the Greek; it does not mean that they should be lifted into the clouds, that may be true, but that they should go up in dense crowds, in throngs, "To meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1) The state to which they ascend is a state of eternal fellowship with the good of all ages. "Caught up together with them," that is, those who are dead and those who will be living, all brought together in

the immediate presence of Christ. What a fellowship will this be! How large, how intelligent, how holy, how blessed! how fraught with every variety of sentiment and attribute to consummate social bliss! No separations there, "For ever with the Lord." (2) The state to which they ascend is a state of eternal fellowship with the Lord of the redeemed: "They shall be for ever with the Lord." For ever with the Lord, not as slaves, but as free men, not as servants, but as friends, not as combatants, but as victors, not as fallen, but as redeemed, not as dying, but as immortal. "For ever with the Lord," with all that is grand in character, enrapturing in beauty, ecstatic in bliss.

In conclusion, let us use this subject according to Paul's exhortation, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words":—"Comfort one another" under the sorrow of social bereavement. How blessed the sainted dead! They sleep in Jesus. How secure their chambers, how peaceful their repose, how glorious their future! They that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. "Comfort one another" under the trials of your Christian course. Glorious things await you. Struggle on and you will get the victory. Be faithful unto death and you shall receive the crown of life. "Comfort one another" under the disappointments and vexations of life. What though your worldly plans are frustrated year by year? What though fortune seems to frown on your path, and augmenting losses threaten to drag you to a pauper's home? If you are living a Christ-like life the sufferings of your present hour are not worthy to be compared, &c.



SUBJECT :—*Man's Character.*

"For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin? I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee. Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what

doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man."—Job xxxv. 3—8.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Seventieth.*

**N**OTHING is so important to man as his character. Character is the fruit of his existence, the organ of his power, the law of his destiny. Nothing else is his property, nothing else will he carry with him beyond the grave, nothing else will determine his condition in eternity. These words of Elihu to Job, suggest three things in relation to man's character:—That selfishness is an evil in man's character; that God is independent of man's character; and that society is influenced by man's character.

I. THAT SELFISHNESS IS AN EVIL IN MAN'S CHARACTER  
 "For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin?" Whether Job expressed this selfish idea or not, Elihu's language implies that such an idea is a great evil. Satan had before charged Job with this selfishness; "doth Job serve God for nought?" Selfishness in every department of action is an evil. But when carried into religious services it has a peculiar enormity. Yet, sad to say, in this sphere it has been prevalent in all ages. It is by no means an uncommon thing for men to take up religion on purely selfish motives. (1) There are some who take it up for mere worldly gain. As religion becomes popular and fashionable in a neighbourhood, the temptation to this increases. Men join congregations in order to increase the number of their clients, their patients, and their customers, and thus enrich their coffers; thus they endeavor to make gain of godliness. (2) There are some who take it up for eternal gain. Their object is to escape hell and get to heaven. Religion, to them, is not the *summum bonum*, is but a means to a selfish end. This selfishness, however it may show itself in a man's character, is an evil. It vitiates every act. Selfishness is incompatible with moral

excellence : the soul of moral excellence is disinterestedness. Selfishness is incompatible with true happiness : true happiness springs from self-oblivion. Selfishness is incompatible with usefulness : all power for good consists in benevolence. Selfishness is incompatible with the spirit of Christ. "He pleased not himself, he sought not his own."

II. THAT GOD IS INDEPENDENT OF MAN'S CHARACTER. "Look unto the heavens, and see ; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him ? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him ?" The idea is, that God is too infinitely exalted to have His happiness at all affected by the character of man, whether good or bad. It does not mean that He is too high to observe our conduct, or to be interested in it, but too high to have His well-being affected by it. Let rebels in His universe be multiplied a million-fold, let all who populate His holiest heavens become rebellious and depraved, it would have no more effect in diminishing His happiness than the breath of an infant in darkening the sun. This being the case, it follows that sovereignty must be the principle of all His conduct with men.

First : *It is the reason of all law.* Why does He require us to love and serve Him ? Not for His own sake, but for ours. Thus only I can become happy.

Secondly : *It is the source of redemption.* Why did He send His Son into the world ? He cannot be advantaged by it. "God so loved the world," &c.

Thirdly : *It is the ground of rewards.* The blessedness He communicates to the good, is given not on the ground of merit, but of grace. He doeth all things according to the counsel of His own will. We can confer no favor upon Him. "He is," says Paul at Athens, "Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." *God's only want is, a want to give.*

III. THAT SOCIETY IS INFLUENCED BY MAN'S CHARACTER. "Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art ; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." "*May* hurt." "*May* profit." Nay, Elihu ; rather say *does*, and *ever must*. "No man liveth unto himself." Every action a man performs before the eye of another, is like a pebble cast into the lake. It will spread out in circling waves until it touch the boundary. Every word spoken to another, swells the flowing current of a deathless soul. One man's character is reproduced in another. The sire comes out in the son ; the past generation re-appears in the present. The wickedness of one *must* hurt society ; the righteousness of one *must* profit society. There are at least three things that give every man some influence upon his race. (1) Relationship. Men are not detached from each other like angels, without father or mother. They derive their existence from others, and transmit it again. Each is a link in the chain, receiving and propagating impulses. (2) Dependence. One is dependent upon another for the necessities of physical life, the means of intellectual culture, and the blessings of religion. (3) Affection. We are creatures of social sympathy. Our affections are rooted in others, and their's in us. Thus we derive and give that which moves the world. We are either a curse or a blessing to society. If wicked, we are fountains of poison that will stream out their pestilential influences long after we are gone. If righteous, we are fountains of life, whence rivers to irrigate, purify, and beautify the world will flow down the ages.

Brother, look well to thy character. Seek goodness for its own sake. Worship the Infinite because it is right ; and thus thou shalt truly bless thyself, and bless all who will come within the circle of thine influence. "Add to your faith virtue ; and to virtue knowledge," &c.

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SUBJECT :—*God's Counsel.*

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath : that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us : which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil : whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 17—20.

## Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Seventy-first.

**I**N fixing the attention upon a portion of God's Word, to inspect its beauties and to seize its great truths, you frequently experience feelings akin to those, when in the twilight of a clear winter's eve you look up into the firmament above your head. First you see one star, it may be a brilliant and beautiful one ; as you watch it, another flashes its rays upon your eye ; then another and another, and many many more in quick and rapid succession, until your whole compass of vision is thickly studded with them, and an enumeration or description is simply impossible. So with the thoughts that rush in upon the mind when its attention is fixed upon the Book of God—the great firmament of truth. This is the character of the passage now under review. A full and lucid exposition of the whole passage has been given in a former number of the "Homilist."\* We shall confine ourselves to one of its leading topics—*God's Counsel.*

The term "counsel," belongs to the same category as "decree," "purpose," "election," "predestination," &c. To us they may have shades of meaning ; in God they are one. God's will is God's decree, and God's counsel is God's predestination. Reduced to its simplest meaning, it means God's fixed, immutable plan of action. When Paul and others speak of God's purpose, election, counsel, &c., we imagine they are not speaking of an isolated, detached, extraordinary feature in God's government, but that which is to be found in every

\* New Series, Vol. IV., p 525.



part of it. God has His counsel or fixed plan of action in relation to every part of His universe, and to every creature great and small in it. Here you have it in relation to sparrows. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Our text tells us that God has a counsel in relation to His people. What is it? It may be summed up in three propositions.

I. THAT THEIR SALVATION FROM SIN SHALL BE A COMPLETE AND PERFECT SALVATION. This is the avowed design—

First: *Of all His purposes.* Are they chosen of God? They were chosen in Christ Jesus "before the foundation of the world, that they should be *holy* and *without blame* before him in love." (Eph. i. 4.) Are they called of God? They are "called with a *holy* calling;" called to be "*saints*"—" *holy brethren*," (2 Tim. i. 9; 1 Cor. i. 2; Heb. iii. 1.) Are they elected? They are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, *through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience* and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter i. 2.) Are they predestinated? They are "predestinate to be *conformed to the image of his Son*." (Rom. viii. 29.) Are they fore-ordained? They are "created in Christ Jesus unto *good works*, which God hath before ordained that *they should walk in them*." (Eph. ii. 10.)

Secondly: *Of all His promises.* Consult Isa. i. 18; Jer. xxxi. 31, 34; Ezek. xi. 19, 20. Paul employs the promises to stimulate the Corinthians to cleanse themselves "from all *filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness* in the fear of God." (2 Cor. vii. 1.) Peter tells us that the design of God in giving them to us is, that by them we "might be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter i. 4.) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse us from all unrighteousness*." (1 John i. 9.)

Thirdly: *Of the earthly mission of His Son.* The great object and design of Christ's mission and death was to take away sin. A mission undertaken and executed by One to

high and mighty, and at such an immense sacrifice, could not be a partial and an incomplete work. Just before His death, with eyes uplift to heaven, He could say, "Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." By this, as well as by His almost last exclamation on the cross, He meant to affirm that full and effectual provision had been made for the entire removal of evil. The teaching of the New Testament is very explicit on this point. Consult Matt. i. 21; John i. 29; Col. i. 21, 22; Titus ii. 11, 14; 1 John i. 7; Heb. ix. 26. By His death we are redeemed from the curse and condemnation of sin; by His cross the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world; and by His Spirit "we crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts." (Gal. iii. 13, v. 24, vi. 14.)

Fourthly: *Of the constant operations of His Spirit.* The Spirit Himself is called a Holy Spirit. "The fruit of the Spirit is in all *goodness and righteousness and truth.*" (Eph. v. 9.) His service is identified with a kingdom that is "not meat and drink, but *righteousness and peace and joy* in the Holy Ghost." It is "through the Spirit that we mortify the deeds of the body." It is "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," that God has chosen us to salvation. (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

Fifthly: *Of the heaven which He has prepared for their eternal residence.* The heaven revealed in Scripture, as the future residence of the saints, is a pure and holy one. There, every thought will be pure, every desire holy, every word chaste, every action truthful, every affection Divine. There, the saints will enjoy uninterrupted communion with a God of immaculate holiness and unsullied purity. To do this, they must be pure and holy too. Christ tells us, "The *pure in heart* shall see God;" and Paul, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." We might advance many more considerations, and quote many more passages of Scripture to confirm our proposition. Let these suffice.

## II. THAT THEIR COMPLETE AND PERFECT SALVATION FROM

SIN SHALL BE EFFECTED BY THEIR OWN PERSEVERANCE. To the apostle, the doctrine of "final perseverance" was no mere dogma, or arbitrary decree on the part of God, but the certain effect of the laws of salvation, or spiritual life—laws as fixed and certain in their operations as those by which suns and planets revolve, and are kept in their courses. The perseverance of the saints is an essential part of that counsel, of which their complete salvation from sin is the great whole. But what is "the perseverance of the saints?" (1) An increasing acquaintance with God's word; implying diligent examination of God's truth, thoughtful investigation of God's revealed will, careful comparison of part with part, and discriminating deductions from the whole. (2) An increasing confidence in God's promises; implying intelligent trust in Him for full pardon of sin, sanctification of spirit for seasonable and adequate strength in temptation, support in trouble, comfort in affliction, and victory in death. (3) An increasing conformity to the image of Christ; implying the embodiment of Christianity in our lives, making our practice agree with our profession, yielding to Christian impulses, cherishing Christian affections, displaying Christian tempers, speaking Christian words, practising Christian actions. What, is this anything legal, anything extraordinary, anything meritorious? Just the effects of the active laws of Christian life, the golden grain of the Christian germ, the fragrant flowers of the Christian plant, the delicious fruit of the Christian tree, the lovely development of the Christian babe. It is God's counsel that the tree should bring forth fruit, so it is God's counsel that His people should abound in fruits of righteousness, holiness, and obedience. Mark! they bring forth these fruits, and increase in them, not by any independent or inherent power of their own, but by the law of Christian life,—the natural product of the vital sap of Christianity, as much as the fruit of the tree is the natural product of the vital sap of the tree. Hear Paul, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.) Is it the

law of the sun to dispel darkness, and of light to shine more and more unto the perfect day? So it is the law of real Christianity to dispel the darkness and the night of sin, and to increase in power and purity until the meridian of holiness be attained. Now for a few considerations to confirm our proposition, that God secures the complete salvation of His people by their own perseverance. It is confirmed—

First: *By the injunctions of Scripture.* God does nothing without their active efforts. Are they to be forgiven? They must come and reason with God. Are they to obtain mercy? They must seek the Lord while He may be found. Are they to be cleansed from their defilement? They must wash in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Are they to find rest? They must come to Christ, and cast their burden at His feet. Are they to be saved? They must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Is their calling and election to be made sure? They are to give all diligence. Is their salvation to be perfected? They are to work it out with fear and trembling. Is the devil to be defeated? They are to resist him, and he will flee from them.

Secondly: *By the nature of the case.* To suppose that God could or would effect the complete restoration of a fallen *moral* being without his own activity and perseverance, is simply at variance with all sound philosophy and reason. Can you teach a child to walk without its constant effort and perseverance? Can you educate a youth for a profession or a trade, or reclaim a barbarian to civilization, without his constant effort and perseverance? No more, from the laws of our nature, could God teach, educate, reclaim, and restore us without our perseverance.

Thirdly: *By the example of saints.* Let that of Paul suffice. Did he expect his salvation to be effected without his own perseverance? Read. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended," &c. (Phil. iii. 13, 14.) There was no one who understood the matter better than Paul, no one more jealous for the honor of God and the glory of His grace. *He has been called the "herald of grace," yet what does he*

say in the hour and prospect of death. "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*" We see, then, that it is the counsel of God, not only that the salvation of His people shall be a complete and perfect salvation, but that it shall be secured by their own perseverance. Can you put steam into an engine without giving motion to its wheels, or progress to its movements? No more can God give a man His Spirit without his constant activity and steady perseverance.

III. THAT THEIR PERSEVERANCE SHALL BE SECURED BY GOD'S OWN BLESSING. There is a strong and striking analogy between God's works and operations in nature, and His works and operations in grace. God has given the seed the principle of vitality and growth, but it requires His blessing, in the rain and the sunshine, for its germination and development. He has given the tree the vital sap, but it needs the light and agency of the sun and atmosphere to make it productive. So with Christian life. God has given us His Spirit, shed abroad the love of His Son in our hearts, but we can do nothing without His constant blessing. But it is a part of His counsel, that His blessing shall attend all the events and circumstances of our daily life, so that each one shall contribute to our stability, growth, and advancement. His blessing attends the services of the sanctuary, and they are made to quicken our spirits and feed our souls, so that by "waiting upon the Lord we renew our strength," &c. (Isa. xl. 31.) His blessing attends the reading of His word, and our errors are corrected, our ignorance is enlightened, our understanding is enlarged, so that we become "wise unto salvation," we "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." His blessing attends our afflictions; they are made to work in us "the peaceable fruits of righteousness," and "to work out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory." His blessing rests upon our trials and troubles; they are made to quicken the development of Christian graces and virtues, so that the trial of our faith worketh patience, and we

can glory in tribulations also, knowing that "tribulation worketh patience," &c. According to God's counsel, His blessing is a solvent that can convert everything, every event, every influence into an element of life, which we may appropriate for our spiritual growth, invigoration, and perfection, securing thereby His one great object and design, our complete and perfect salvation. Here we have the perseverance of the saints based not upon dogma or arbitrary decree, but upon fixed immutable law, the law of Christian life, harmonizing with the soundest philosophy, demonstrable to the strongest reason, and supported by the plainest teachings of God's word. Our argument is cumulative and irresistible.

First: *It is God's counsel that the salvation of His people shall be a complete and perfect salvation.* This is the avowed design of all His purposes, of all His promises, of the earthly mission of His Son, of the constant operations of His Spirit, of the heaven which He has prepared for their eternal residence. This, then, engages and employs all the thoughts and designs, all the energies and operations, all the sympathies and affections of the Triune Godhead. But—

Secondly: *It is also God's counsel that this shall be secured by their own perseverance.* Now, it is the law of that salvation, that where it is once commenced it draws out, exercises, strengthens, and develops the most ardent affections, the strongest impulses, the noblest faculties, and the most unconquerable energies of our nature. So, that by His counsel, God enlists on His side, and employs the mightiest energies, and the most potent influences man himself can command and exercise. Then—

Thirdly: *It is also God's counsel that their perseverance shall be secured by His own blessing.* That is, He will so employ everything in nature, in providence, and in grace, health and affliction, adversity and prosperity, sorrow and joy, comfort and tribulation, success and failure, the services of the sanctuary, the cares of the family, the anxieties of business, the temptations of Satan, the seductions of the world, the infirmities of the flesh, that each one shall be a new impetus,

an auxiliary force, to accelerate their progress Godward, Christward, Heavenward. Hear Paul, "*All things shall work together for good to them that love God.*" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things *we are more than conquerors*, through Him that loved us," &c. Here then we see all things, all things in heaven, all things on earth, God and angels, devils and men, all made to conspire to the securing of God's counsel, in the complete and perfect salvation of His people from sin.

BENJAMIN PREECE

*Poplar.*



SUBJECT:—*The Voices of the Soul in View of Sin and of Salvation from it.*

"And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this."—Ezra ix. 13.

Analysis of *Homily the Six Hundred and Seventy-second.*

**U**NDER the influence of a great grief, we have in our text the soul uttering two voices.

I. THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE IN VIEW OF SIN. Conscience says—

First: *That man himself is responsible for his sins.* Conscience makes man own his sins as *his*, as belonging to himself in the most entire sense. "*Our evil deeds, and our great trespass,*" says conscience. There is a strong tendency in man to charge his sins on others; sometimes on God Himself. Man is ready to say, because sin is in the world, and because no man is able to account for its origin, that therefore God Himself must be the Author of it. The apostle James would have everyone to guard against this sinful tendency. "Let no man say," says he, "when he is tempted,

I am tempted of God ; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." Sometimes he charges it on his fellow human creature, as Adam did. "And he (that is Adam) said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." (Gen. iii. 12.) Sometimes on the devil. "And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat." (Gen. iii. 13.) But an awakened conscience refers not to the tempter, nor to the temptation, neither does it say anything about necessity, nor the influence of circumstances ; but says, with emphasis, "*Our* evil deeds, and *our* great trespass." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Conscience speaks—

Secondly : *Of the great evil of sin.* Man is prone to make his sins look less than they really are. But conscience speaks of their great turpitude. "*Our evil* deeds, and *our great* trespass," says conscience. Conscience, like the Divine commandment, shows the "exceeding sinfulness of sin." Conscience says—

Thirdly : *That punishment is connected with sin.* "And after all that is come upon us *for* our evil deeds, and *for* our great trespass." There is nothing that distinguishes man from the irrational creatures more than the reasoning faculty and the idea of right which he possesses. There is punishment connected with the transgression of every law of God, both in the natural and in the moral world. Sin committed on earth, if not forgiven, will be followed with punishment in a million of years to come. Man is able to see that death is not an accident, but that it is the result of sin. The constitution of the universe is such that punishment inevitably follows sin in this world, without the direct interposition of God. God has so made His laws, that they punish everyone that transgresseth them themselves. The laws of God require no officer to enforce them ; they will punish the offender themselves. Punishment may also follow sin in the world to come, without the direct interposition of God. Conscience says—

*Fourthly : That sin is not punished in this world according*



to its ill desert. "Seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve." The sense of right or justice is still strong in man, notwithstanding his depravity, and when he is in the light he sees that God does not punish him according to his ill desert in the present world ; that God does not administer stern justice to him here. It is true that the crop is not always proportionate to the seed sown, neither is it at all times regular as to time in the present life ; but in the next, it will be proportionate in degree, and seasonable as to time. "For whatsoever a man soweth (in this life) that shall he also reap" (in the life to come). There are two reasons which account for punishment not being in this world proportionate in degree, and regular as to time, to the sin committed. (1) *Because it is a world in which good and evil exist.* We know of a world where nothing but good exists ; and we know, also, of a world where nothing but evil exists. And very often they come across each other, preventing one another from going on in their regular course. Look at Saul of Tarsus. He is on his downward path to hell ; but there, as he goes, the good comes across his way and prevents him from going any further. There is a wicked son on his journey to destruction, but the examples and prayers of his parents are in his way that he cannot well go. (2) *Because there is more mercy than justice in this world.* The scale is never level when there is more weight in one end than in the other. What is the cause of the lightning and thundering in the natural world but the loss of the equilibrium in the air ? So in the moral world, we see it sometimes much disturbed, and that in consequence of there being more mercy here than justice. Justice in this life is like an eternal sea kept within its bounds with only a few streams running over its banks just to show that it exists, while mercy is like an eternal ocean deluging the world. Justice is silent, as it were, here ; but "mercy rejoiceth against judgment." Speaking of the fig tree, "Cut it down," the first year, says justice ; "Let it alone this year also," says mercy, "till I shall dig about it and dung it."

II. THE VOICE OF WONDER IN VIEW OF GOD'S SALVATION FROM SIN. "And hast given us such deliverance as this." This wonder is caused by two things.

First : *By the greatness of the deliverance.* "Such deliverance as this." The deliverance of the Jews from Babylon was great and wonderful. See how God raised up Cyrus for this great purpose, and the wonderful way in which Cyrus conquered Babylon and released the captive Jews. But the deliverance of immortal souls from eternal death is still more wonderful and greater. And of this salvation we mean now to speak. The greatness and the wonder of this salvation is seen in three things. (1) *Its origin.* What a wonderful great mercy it is that God offers salvation to man at all. God never offered deliverance to the angels that sinned against Him ; but He invites man to come to Him and be saved. (Isa. xlv. 22 ; Matt. xi. 28.) (2) *In the way in which it has been brought about.* The way in which the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon was accomplished was marvellous. Think how Cyrus turned the river Euphrates from its bed, and entered the city by night, and conquered the great king of Babylon. But the manner in which the salvation of the world was effected, is a wonder to all the universe. It required the life, the sufferings, and death of God's own Son, to bring about salvation for immortal souls. The human race were captives in the great Babylon of sin. Christ on Calvary conquered the great enemy of souls, and released humanity to a state of conditional hope. (3) *In the vastness of the blessings which it brings to man.* It was a great blessing for the Jews to be freed from Babylon, and brought back to their own country ; but nothing, as compared with releasing a soul from sin and eternal woe, and bringing it to heaven at last—a salvation which not only saves from hell, but gives "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

Secondly : *By looking at the awful consequences of rejecting this salvation.* Ezra is quite confounded here by thinking of the people's transgression, and the awful consequences that

would follow if they would not repent of their sins, and seek forgiveness of them. (ver. 14.) "But what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God." "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." (John 3. 19.)

Since we see that sin is a great evil, and that it will be followed with an awful punishment, let us refrain from it. Let us praise God for providing "so great salvation" for us. Let every one at once avail himself of this salvation.

E. JONES.

## Biblical Exegesis.

ROM. VIII. 3.

*τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένει,  
διὰ τῆς σαρκός.  
ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας  
ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας, καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας  
κατέκρινε τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί.*

In the English version, this passage reads as an incomplete sentence, without any termination satisfactory to the understanding, thus :—

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

Here, there appears to be a nominative, namely, "What the law could not do," without a verb. Several expedients have been proposed in order to get rid of the difficulty. The following way of reading the passage seems to be deserving of consideration.

The apostle has just before called the law "the law of sin and death." From this he is describing the method of deliverance; that is, the enabling us to walk after the Spirit. How does walking after the Spirit make us free from the law? The answer to this implied question he introduces by the

particle (*γὰρ*) for. The answer itself, we think, is contained in the words immediately following, as far as *σαρκος*, which, in our way of taking them, make a complete sentence, thus :—

“For what was impossible for the law, in that it was weak, *was* through the flesh.”

In other words, the law appealing only to the sense of rectitude and desert, and not to the affections, failed, because the affections were perverted by the inferior nature, the flesh. The conscience alone is unable to contend with and control the flesh. The law appealing to the conscience, is weak by the weakness of the conscience. But now that the Spirit is brought in, an almighty antagonist to the flesh, we are made free from the law, as a law of sin and death, and with love we obey the Divine commandments.

The following part of the passage, beginning with “God,” makes now another complete sentence.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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At length we reach the Scriptures themselves, the apparatus for studying them, and the method of using it. We advise the student, by all means, to begin with the Hebrew Bible. Biblical conceptions and Biblical diction are not the sudden outburst of a moment, but the growth of long ages. Go to the simplest beginnings of Revelation, and then trace the course and the enlargement of the stream.

The new Hebrew Grammar by Dr. Kalisch is, in copiousness of reference to passages and in minute analysis, superior even to Gesenius's. But it is so marred by errors of the press as to be rendered almost useless to a beginner. He had

better therefore use Gesenius. Rödiger's edition, published by Bagster, is the best. The most complete exercise book we have seen is Moses Stuart's Chrestomathy. The Oxford edition can be got for a trifle at the book-shops.

Van der Hooght's Hebrew Bible is generally preferred: indeed it is the only decent one available. The Bible Society's edition is the cheapest, but Hahn's (Leipzig, 1839) has handsomer type, and a convenient Masoretic key.

For a lexicon you had better, if familiar with Latin, use the Leipzig octavo of Gesenius. If you prefer an English one, you will have to pay thrice the money for Bagster's quarto, in which Dr. Tregelles's notes, intended as antidotes to Gesenius's real and supposed heresies, will sometimes provoke a smile.

Another work, highly convenient to the beginner, and not to be despised even by the advanced student, to whom the opinion of another is often valuable, is the "Analytical Lexicon" by Davison, also published by Bagster. It is indeed, Hebrew made easy, containing as it does, not the roots alone, but every form which actually occurs in the Bible, with a grammatical description. It is preceded by an excellent Grammar, a repertory of the facts of the text. This work, which must have cost the author severe and long labor, is printed with wonderful accuracy. It so greatly facilitates the acquisition of Hebrew, that the knowledge of it will probably in a few years be very general as a theological attainment.

In order to make any theological use of Hebrew, a concordance is indispensable. Wigram's "Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance to the Old Testament" is very correct, and is peculiarly serviceable as showing the relation of the English version to the original. Fuerst's Concordance has the advantage of giving the old standard definitions, first in Rabbinical Hebrew, then in Latin. It also gives the Septuagint renderings of every word. The passages adduced under each word are printed in unpointed Hebrew. The book is a goodly folio, of great typographical beauty.

The Septuagint version has been happily called a *viaticum*.

between the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament. It was by means of this, chiefly, that the theological diction of the New Testament was formed. The student cannot be too urgently exhorted to acquire familiarity with the Septuagint.

Trommius's invaluable "Concordance to the Septuagint" consists of two parts. In the first, under each word, the passages in which it occurs are arranged in groups under the Hebrew or Chaldee words, for which it is used. The student is generally able to perceive at a glance for which Hebrew word or words the Greek word which he is investigating is most frequently employed. In the second part, the Hebrew and Chaldee words are given, and under each the Greek words which are employed in rendering them are stated. The Greek words most frequently used for the Hebrew or Chaldee word in question are denoted by the adverbs *sæpius* or *sæpissime*; numerals being affixed to the others, shewing how often each is employed for the Hebrew or Chaldee. A moment's reflection will convince the student that such an aid is inestimable and indispensable.

Maurer's "Commentary on the Old Testament" is highly commended by Tholuck, as "in acute apprehension of the thought and in exact explanation of the words of the text, far surpassing Rosenmüller." It is in four volumes octavo, and is written in easy Latin.

The most commodious New Testament, for the text alone, is Scrivener's (Cambridge, 1860). It gives the Received Text, printing however all words of which there are various readings in a type different from the rest, with numeral references to the foot of the page, where the readings of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles are given, omissions being marked minus — and additions plus + and substitutions printed. This edition, together with the Collation of the Sinaitic Codex before mentioned, gives the student the criticism of the New Testament in a nutshell. For a New Testament Grammar, the student can hardly do better than procure Webster's "Syntax and Synonyms of the Greek Testament." For a *Lexicon* he should procure Bretschneider's. It is the work of an acute and scientific mind and a good scholar.

The meanings are clearly given and logically arranged, with references to passages, much in the manner of a concordance. Great use is made of the Septuagint, and of Philo and Josephus; the author regarding such works as more suitable for his purpose than the classic authors.

Very great help may be gained from Grinfield's Hellenistic Greek Testament, where every verse is illustrated by the Septuagint, Philo, Josephus, and the most ancient Christian writers. Cases, however, will occur in which it is necessary to investigate the classical usage. The best Lexicon, for this purpose is Schleusner's.

The best Concordance to the Greek Testament is Bruder's edition of Schmidt. It is printed on good paper, in clear and beautiful type, and the various associations and usages of words are commodiously pointed out by certain marks. Prefixed are three valuable Indices, with short accounts of Manuscripts, Ancient Versions, and the Fathers and other Ecclesiastical writers.

Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament, First and Second Part, is indispensable. Additional help on the Synonyms will be found in Webster's work already mentioned.

Suicer's Thesaurus, although a Dictionary, constitutes in effect the best existing commentary on the New Testament. It brings together and condenses within the compass of two folio volumes, the mind of the oldest and best Greek fathers and commentators. There are but few verses for which, on consulting the index, elucidation may not be found. It is a far from contemptible substitute for the works of the Fathers themselves. Besides the words of the New Testament, it embraces many of the Old, the terms of the ancient theology, of the various heresies, and of ritual.

Provided with this apparatus, the student will find but little use for a Greek Testament with a Commentary. The chief service it can render, besides archæological information, may be either to assure him that he has made no important omissions in the consideration of particular passages, or to suggest something which has escaped him. The best Commentary on the New Testament consists of the Concordance,

and of the passages selected from the Hellenistic writers and the Fathers, by the above authors.

There is, however, a Commentary which it would be almost a sin to omit. We mean the celebrated work of Bengel, entitled, "Gnomon of the New Testament, in which from the native force of the words, the depth, harmony, and healthfulness of the heavenly meanings is indicated." This invaluable work was written in Latin, and the original may be had cheap; but as the style is rather difficult, some students will find it convenient to procure, though at greater expense, the good translation published by Messrs. Clark, of Edinburgh.

The suffrages of educators and advisers of youth are, in the matters of Greek Testaments with Commentaries, divided between Alford's, Webster and Wilkinson's, and Wordsworth's. Alford's displays considerable reading, but is not perfectly digested. His tendencies are towards what are termed "broad" views. Webster's Commentary does not take so wide a range, but within its range is better condensed, manifests acquaintance with the niceties of Greek, and throws new grammatical light on many passages. The apparent fault is a greater dread of offending against popular orthodoxy than Catholic theology. Wordsworth's is compact, very carefully done, and displays a vast amount of learning. The spirit is that of Church orthodoxy, with, possibly, a leaning here and there to more modern, and less well-grounded conceptions.

Calmet's Commentary on the Bible, in French, in twenty-six volumes, quarto, should be obtained, if possible. Calmet was a first-rate scholar of the old school, which had profounder, if not wider, learning, and less self-conceit, than the modern. His work is valuable for its thorough treatment of difficult passages, on which it gives the sentiments of the best ancient and modern writers, and shows which are to be preferred. It, also, contains a great amount of archæological information, and the numerous dissertations on various curious, or important questions of difficulty, are monuments of learning and judgment.



# The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

## *Advent.*

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."—Rom. xiii. 11.

GOSPEL exhortation ever grows in earnestness and urgency. It ever points towards the future. The motives for Christian holiness are always becoming more powerful. As time advances it brings ever weightier reasons for watchfulness. Sometimes, a season of privilege, long promised, hoped and waited for, is represented as at last arrived. Thus St. Paul in 2 Cor. vi. 2 founds an exhortation to the due and profitable reception of the grace of God, on the arrival of the period predicted by the prophet Isaiah as "*the accepted time and the day of salvation.*" It is quite a mistake to quote this passage, as is sometimes done, to show the necessity of beginning at once the work of repentance, and of the service of God, as if the apostle intended to urge us to improve the present, since we are not sure of the future. Such an exhortation is, of course, based on truth and is of exceeding importance. But it is not, for all that, any the more desirable to purchase it at the price of misrepresenting a passage of Scripture. The apostle is here contrasting the present, not with the future, but with the past. He says that the promised season of Divine favor and succour has at last arrived. Isaiah (xlix. 8) says: "*Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee.*" Quoting the words, the apostle says: "*Behold now is the accepted time: behold now is the day of salvation;*" now under the Christian economy. Nothing can be plainer than his meaning, or that the manner in which the passage is too commonly cited, is founded on a miserable

misapprehension. It is always far better to preserve the meaning of Scripture, than to use it remotely from the intention of the writer, though the sense we put upon it may be important and our design may be good. But to return.

As in the passage referred to in 2 Cor., the apostle uses the arrival of a hoped-for season as an inducement to the due reception of God's gift, so in our text he urges the increased nearness of the promised future blessing as a reason for watchfulness. "*And that,*" or "*and this,*" that is the duty to which I exhort you, do, "*knowing the time, that the hour is come that we should awake out of sleep ; for now is our salvation nearer, than when we believed.*"

When the Roman Christians first believed the Gospel, they received a promise of *salvation*. *Salvation* is a very comprehensive word ; it includes deliverance of the Church and every member of it from all evil ; it embraces the sum of all the blessings which God confers on them through Christ. Now this salvation is always in progress. It is every day nearer. We shall if we are wise watch the signs of its time. We cannot indeed *know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power*. We cannot know the precise time when our deliverance will be accomplished, or when one of the promised blessings will be conferred. But we can and we ought to watch the indications of the progress of the Divine plan. We can and we ought to *discern the signs of the time*. And seeing that *salvation* is constantly drawing nearer, our watchfulness ought to increase in proportion.

First: *The season of the triumph of the Gospel is approaching.*

The prophets predict, in the most glowing words which have kindled the hopes of the Catholic Church in all ages, a time when the Gospel shall not only be universally preached, but everywhere believed and everywhere obeyed. In the time of the apostles, nothing would have seemed more improbable to mere human judgment than the general prevalence of their doctrine. In faith they proclaimed it, in faith they

suffered for it, and in faith they died. They relied on the Divine promise, they confided in the power of the truth itself, and in its fitness to human nature and human necessity. Since their time, the progress of the truth has been greatly hindered by human infirmity, especially by the shameful corruption and slothfulness of the Church. Yet progress there has been, progress great and encouraging. Now, the faith of Christ prevails amongst the foremost nations, and every generation obtains some new advantage. Now, we might safely predict, even on the ground of mere human probability, the universal spread of this faith and its final triumph over the obstinacy of the Jew and the darkness of the heathen. "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*" Even now the dawn is on the Eastern hills. Already the tops of the mountains have caught the golden beam, and presently there shall rise on all men a vision of glory.

If then the Gospel is soon to triumph, let us act worthily of it. It is a system of justice and mercy, of purity and peace. These are soon to prevail. Let us strive more earnestly to anticipate their prevalence by shewing them forth in our own lives. Let us strive to promote them amongst others.

Secondly: *The season of Christ's Second Advent is approaching.*

The Old Testament is one great prediction of Christ's Advent, which the New Testament has but partially fulfilled. We are still in expectation. Ever since the apostles on the Mount Olivet gazed up into heaven after their vanished Lord, the Church has been yearning for His return. Our treasure is not on earth, but in heaven, and thither we look for His re-appearance. It is a solemn thought that we are now eighteen centuries nearer to that glory than were the apostles, and that every Advent season which passes takes one more from the limited number to elapse ere the Very Advent which they foreshow. In view of this prospect, the disposition of the Church should be anxiety for readiness and fitness to meet the Lord. And the same should obtain

in every member. No habits of life, of speech, or of thought, should be indulged, which would call forth His disapproval. Every act should be performed, every word spoken, every thought encouraged, which He has enjoined. Slothfulness must be shaken off, and we must stand ready for inspection.

Let us endeavor to rise to the sentiment of the Collect for this day, which, in grandeur and beauty of expression, and in fulness and weightiness of meaning, is unsurpassed by any other in the Book. O, brethren! how much benefit, and how much pleasure do we lose, as many as pass through the service of the Church lightly and carelessly! Let us not shew ourselves unworthy of the Book by cold, unappreciating use of it. If we made it a study, receiving its meaning into our minds and hearts, coming to Church would be a means of our highest and most exquisite pleasure, as well as sanctifying and guiding our lives. Those who neglect the prayer-book little know what is its capacity for strengthening the mind with the most wholesome and noblest nourishment, for the culture of personal godliness; how, in simplicity, it is fitted to the child; and in profundity, surpasses the faculty of the wise; how far superior it is to any modern preaching, which too often undoes the work of the service which it follows, falling as far short of it, in soundness of doctrine, as in strength of thought, and beauty of diction.

Thirdly : *The season of our departure is approaching.*

The nearness of death is what no thoughtful mind can contemplate without seriousness. It is probable, with regard to many of us, that we have already lived the larger portion of our time in this world. We shall none of us live very much longer, and some may depart very soon. Every day we pass leaves a day less for this world, and brings us a day nearer the solemn moment when we shall be lying powerless, our faculties growing dimmer and dimmer; when we must leave the old familiar mode of existence, our accustomed haunts and occupations, and go forth into a new and untried scene; when the disembodied soul will have an awful interview with the Great God, make a just retrospect of life, and

receive its sentence for eternity. If we are Christians indeed, that solemn moment will find us in peace, for Christ has robbed death of his sting, and will give us the victory. Soon will the body of death be relinquished, and temptation be no more. Soon shall we enter *the house not made with hands*, exchange the imperfection of faith for the perfection of sight, join the fellowship of those who are resting in Christ, and love and serve better than we have done here. A few more risings and settings of the sun, and he will rise on us the last time, and this earthly night shall be succeeded by eternal glory. *And, that knowing the time, that now is the hour for us to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*

Sleep or slothfulness is the sin which is the most familiar to the Christian. It is the opposite to that watchfulness which is so often inculcated by the Lord. It is always blameworthy as an unprofitable state of inactivity, and it sometimes betrays to worse offences. The sins specified by the apostle in the words following the text, are those of intemperance, uncleanness, and breaches of brotherly love; vice public and social; vice private; and that discord which sometimes rages in the very Church. Let us awake out of sleep; put off the works of darkness, and array ourselves in the apparel of light; in the *armour* which becometh soldiers fighting their way to heaven. Let us, by an act of the spirit, an act, the most inward, personal and resolute, an act constantly renewed, *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, put ourselves in the most intimate connexion with Him, breathing His very Spirit, copying His example, trusting His mercy. In this way, and in this way only, shall we be ready whenever the approaching, and decisive change arrives. If we put on the Lord Jesus Christ, death will be our *salvation made certain*; and the Second Advent will be our *salvation accomplished*. God grant to us all that we may then rise to the life immortal!

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY.

"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."—Acts xi. 23.

THREE things are worthy of notice. "Who, when he came." Who is the person referred to here? It was Barnabas, a man described in verse 24 as a "good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." First: *The scene* from which Barnabas is sent. It was Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judæa, arrayed in the Jewish mind with the religious association of ages. Here the Gospel had been preached, thousands had been converted, and a Church was formed—the grand mother-church. Secondly: *The scene to which* he was sent. It was Antioch, at that time one of the most powerful cities of the East, the centre of immense influence. Thirdly: *The reason why* he was sent. The Gospel had been preached in Antioch, "and a great number there believed and turned to the Lord." This glorious fact reaches the mother-church at Jerusalem, thrills its heart with interest, and Barnabas is sent forth to sanction, nourish, and *direct the new life*. The

text suggests four thoughts in relation to personal Christianity.

I. That personal Christianity IS ESSENTIALLY IDENTIFIED WITH DIVINE GRACE. "The grace of God." He saw Divine grace in the conversion of the Gentiles, and the new life developed through the preaching of the Gospel. First: Personal Christianity *originates* in Divine grace. "Of his own will begat he us, &c." Secondly: Personal Christianity is *sustained* by Divine grace. It is nourished, strengthened and perfected in the soul by grace. Thirdly: Personal Christianity is *a reflection* of Divine grace. Wherever there is true personal Christianity, there is the highest display of the loving heart of God.

II. That personal Christianity, WHEREVER IT EXISTS, IS AN OBSERVABLE FACT. "Barnabas saw it at Antioch." Personal Christianity is not an inoperative sentiment, not a candle that can be concealed under a bushel. It must reveal itself. First: The *ruking spirit* of life is new. There is a new heart. Old things are passed away. Secondly: The *master-purpose*

of life is new. The aim is, not to serve sense or self, or the world, but to glorify God in everything. Thirdly: *The prevailing conduct* of life is new. It is the characteristic of converted men that they are about their Father's business.

III. That personal Christianity IN ITS EXTENSION, DELIGHTS THE HEART OF THE GOOD. "Barnabas was glad." There is nothing so adapted to gladden the heart of a truly devout and philanthropic spirit, as the extension of Christianity in the world. They know that as that spreads—First: *The world's happiness will be promoted.* It is the only power that works off evils—social, political, and moral. Secondly: *God's character will be revealed.* It clears away from the mind the cloud that conceals the moral beauty of the great God of the universe.

IV. That personal Christianity REQUIRES ON BEHALF OF ITS SUBJECTS THE MOST PERSEVERING EFFORT. He "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." (1) There are many forces to separate us from the Lord; remnants of corrupt feeling within us, corrupt social influence around us, &c. (2)

These forces can only be counteracted by the most strenuous efforts,— "purpose of heart." There must be watching, praying, running, &c.

Brother, though thy Christianity is of the "grace of God," that grace has made its growth and continuance dependent on thine efforts. With an invincible purpose, adhere to the Lord; hold on with the tenacity of thy being to the truths of His Word, and the promises of His love.

#### PHASES OF THE GOSPEL.

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."—Acts xiii. 46.

THE preceding verses of this chapter contain a long discourse, full of historic truth and practical point, delivered by Paul to the Jews at Antioch. The immense excitement which his ministry caused in this city, filled the Jews with envy, "And they spoke against those things, which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." Opposition never intimidates great natures in a good cause. On the contrary, it brings out their manhood in defiant attitudes. Hence we

are told that Paul and Barnabas waxed bold. In the text we have three things.

I. THE GOSPEL OFFERED BY A DIVINE PLAN. "It was necessary," said the apostles to those unbelieving and persecuting Jews, "that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you." Necessary? What made it necessary? The purpose of Christ. He commanded "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." The Jews were to have the first offer. There were good and wise reasons for this. Their offer to the Jew "first," was—First: *The strongest proof of the sincerity of their own faith.* The Jew lived on the very scenes where the great facts of Christianity occurred. They were eye-witnesses of the whole. Their offer to the Jew "first," was—Secondly; *The strongest proof of the mercifulness of their system.* The loving germs of their religion came out in this. The Jew was the greatest sinner; the Jews crucified the Lord of life and glory. Christ's true ministers, in offering the provisions of the Gospel to man, are directed by Divine plan. There is no caprice or accident in their movements. In the text we have—

## II. THE GOSPEL REJECTED BY AN UNBELIEVING PEOPLE.

"Seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life." Judge yourselves unworthy! Is not this withering irony? The Jew think himself unworthy of eternal life! Proud spirits; they considered nothing too good in heaven or earth for them; they felt themselves worthy of heaven's choicest gifts. First: *Man's conduct is his true verdict upon himself.* A man is not what he may think he is, or say he is, or what others may judge he is, but is what his conduct is. His every-day life pronounces the true sentence upon himself; the only sentence that conscience will accept. Secondly: *By rejecting the Gospel, a man's sentence upon himself is terribly awful.* "Unworthy of eternal life." The man who rejects the Gospel declares, by that very act, his thorough unworthiness, unfitness for eternal life. He dooms himself to eternal death. In the text we have—

III. THE GOSPEL PROMOTED BY EARNEST MEN. "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." We have no time to lose. Souls by millions around us want the salvation we are commissioned to offer. We have offered it to you. You have rejected it. Adieu, we



hasten to other spheres. "We turn to the Gentiles." Two things are suggested here. First: *A lamentable condition for a people.* These unbelieving Jews are left; the apostles turn from them. The Gospel is withdrawn. A greater calamity this to a people, than if the sun went down and left their heavens in sackcloth. Mercy will not always continue with the people. "My spirit shall not always strive with man." Secondly: *An obvious duty for a ministry.* It was right for these Gospel-laborers to leave a rocky, sterile and unproductive soil, and try elsewhere. Their field is the world. Ministers are not only justified, but often bound to leave their sphere of labor. That ministry which is unsuccessful in one sphere, is often gloriously prosperous in another. These apostles wrought wonders amongst the Gentiles.

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MORAL RELAPSE AND MORAL  
ADVANCE.

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."—Acts xiv. 22.

THIS verse states a portion of the work which Paul and Barnabas did on their return to Lystra, Iconium, and

Antioch, and it suggests two things.

I. THE DANGER OF MORAL RELAPSE. Why else did they return to those who had accepted the Gospel? "I confirm," &c. Confirming means strengthening. (*Επι-στηρίζοντες.*) The word has no reference whatever to the religious rite, which is now called *confirmation* in some churches. Wherever the scriptural authority for such a rite is found, it is not here. The work here done by the apostles was not ceremonial, but moral,—the infusing of new energy into the faith of the disciples. The word "and" is not in the original, and should be omitted. The meaning of the sentence is—the apostles confirmed the souls of the Gentiles by exhorting them to continue in the faith. This work of the apostles indicated the liability of the disciples to relapse. Such a liability, alas, exists. First: *Good men are subject to influences inducing a relapse.* Secondly: *There are instances of good men in all ages who have relapsed.* Hence the importance of the work of strengthening men's souls by exhortation. There is a ministry required, not only to bring men into the faith, but to keep them in it. The verse suggests—

II. THE CONDITION OF MORAL ADVANCE. "We must through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God." As a rule, difficulty and trial are the conditions of advancement in every department of life. Generally physical competence and social influence come as the result of great struggle, and much vexatious labour. Intellectual eminence is also reached in this way. Mental culture, wealth and power are never gained but through

much tribulation, and a great weariness to the flesh. It is always so in spirituals. Peace of conscience, purity of feeling, nobility of purpose, force of character, are gained through an agony amounting to a crucifixion. Christ Himself was made perfect through suffering. "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment," &c. Look to the upper heavens. Behold the ranks of redeemed men. Whence came they? They came out of great tribulation.

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## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### GREAT FRENCH PREACHERS.

To those who have a facility in the language, we commend the careful study of the French pulpit; for to speak of preaching, and not to name the time of Louis the Fourteenth, would be like discoursing of sculpture without allusion to the age of Pericles. Considered as a product of literary art, the sermon never attained such completeness, beauty and honor, as at this period. Our remark must not be taken apart from our limitations. We do not say it was the most apostolic, the most scriptural, or the most fitted to reach the great spiritual end of preaching; the results show that such was not the fact. But viewed in relation to letters, logic, and eloquence, as a structure of genius and taste, the French sermon, in the hands of its great orators, had a rhetorical perfection as distinctly marked as the Greek drama. We

are constrained to look upon it in much the same light. The plays of Corneille and the victories of Turenne were not more powerful in penetrating the public mind, than the oratory of Notre Dame. Rank and fashion, including royalty itself, thronged the church, as if it were a theatre, wondering and weeping. Madame de Sevigné, the best painter of her age, speaks of a *belle passion*, as the Good Friday sermon was called, just as she speaks of the Cid. The greatest scholars and critics of the Augustan era of France, saw their idea of faultless composition realized in the pulpit. The culmination of the art was rapid, and the decline soon followed. No one will claim more than a few names for the catalogue of masterly French preachers; Bourdaloue, Bossuet, Fénelon, Massillon, Fléchier. Many who had a temporary vogue in their day, have been forgotten; but these

sustain the ordeal of time. We shall offer a few remarks on some of them, but chiefly on the unapproachable triumvirate. To

### BOURDALOUE

is unhesitatingly given the honour of having raised the French pulpit at once to its greatest height. The judgment of our day is coming more and more to acquiesce in the decision which ranks him clearly first. We may see in La Bruyère how degenerate preaching had become before his day. It was florid, quaint, affected, perplexed with divisions, and overlaid with impertinent learning. He restored it to reason and to nature. No misapprehension can be greater than that which imagines Bourdaloue to have been a man of show, a gaudy rhetorician, or a declaimer. He was, of course, a strenuous Papist, he was even a Jesuit; but assuming his Church to be right, there never was a more unanswerable reasoner in her behalf. It is reasoning, above all things else, which is his characteristic. Seldom does he utter even a few sentences without a connected argument. The amount of matter in his discourses, which are sometimes very long, is truly wonderful. His power of condensation, his exactness of method, his singular clearness, and his animated force, enable him to throw an elaborate argument into a single head. The glory of his art is his magical ability to clothe the subtlest reasoning, in diction so beautiful, as to captivate even the unthinking. In our view, his sermons are a study for the young logician. Even when he is defending the extreme errors of Rome, as in his discourse on the saving merit of alms, we feel that we are in the hands of a terrible antagonist. Amidst passages of incomparable fire he seems constrained to indulge his propensity

for laying a train of proofs. Thus in his passion-sermon, on the power of the cross, he inserts in the first and greatest part, a series of admirable arguments for the truth of Christianity.

In some points which concern the outward form of the discourse, Bourdaloue left much to be reformed by his great successors. His divisions are bold and numerous, and are stated not only with openness, but with a repetition which we have seen nowhere else. So far from hiding the articulations of his work, he is anxious that they should be observed and never forgotten; but he so varies the formulæ of partition, and so beautifies the statement of transitions, by ingenious turns, that the mind is gratified by the exquisiteness of the expression. It had been the fashion to quote the Fathers very largely. Bourdaloue retains this practice. He even seems to wish that his whole performance should rest on citations; and some of them look like centos from Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory. But his management of this is graceful and masterly. And it is entertaining to observe with how rich and eloquent an amplification he will paraphrase and apply one of these little Latin sentences, often bringing it in again and again to close some striking period, and making ring it on the ear with happy vehemence at the climax of a paragraph.

If the observation be modified by our protest against the enormities of Popish falsehood, we are willing to say that Bourdaloue was eminently a spiritual, warm, and edifying preacher. Upon the sufferings of Christ, the love of God, the vanity of the world, and the delights of heavenly contemplation, he speaks with a solemnity and an unction, which explain to us the admiration felt for him by

Boileau and other Jansenists. The manner in which Bourdaloue pronounced his discourses must have had a power of incantation to which even their greatness as compositions gives us no key. It was his remarkable custom to deliver his sermons with his eyes closed; and he is so represented in his portrait. On coming from the provinces, to preach in the Jesuit Chapel in Paris, he was at once

followed by crowds of the highest distinction; and his popularity increased to the very close. For thirty-four years he was equally admired by the court, by men of letters, and by the people. To the Christian visitor in Paris, there is something solemn in the church of St. Paul and St. Lewis, to approach the tablet with the simple inscription, *HIC JACET BOURDALOUE.*

DR. ALEXANDER.

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## Theological Notes and Queries.

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### OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

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#### BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 4, p. 236. The Rev. W. D. Harris, Baptist Minister of Camden Town, has recently published (Hall, Smart, & Allen) a Lecture in which he endeavors to show that Baptismal Regeneration is taught in Nonconformist Churches generally. But what Nonconformist *really* believes in the dogma, or sensible Churchman either?

#### THE WORD "JUSTIFY."

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 5, p. 236. In Rom. iv. 2, we read, "If Abraham were *justified* by works," &c., and a little after, "It was counted unto him for righteousness." This seems to imply that to *justify* is to *reckon righteous*. Again, in Rom. viii. 33, 34, we read, "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Here justification and condemnation are evidently contrasted.

#### ABRAM'S MIGRATION.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 6, p. 236. The part of Chaldaea in which Ur lay, was in Mesopotamia. In obedience to the Divine command, Abram left Ur for Canaan, and stayed at Haran on his way.

#### BALAAH.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 7, p. 237. It is merely another way of writing the Hebrew word, which cannot be precisely represented in Greek characters at all. Neither *Bewp* nor *Bosop* exactly hits the mark. The former is the reading of the Septuagint, and of some copies of 2 Pet. ii. 15. In English letters the original Hebrew might be approached by B'ghor, or B'ngnor, or B'chor. The fact is, the second consonant, the sound of Ayin, does not exist in Greek, and without considerable practice is unexecutable by an English throat.

## DISINTERESTED VIRTUE.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 8, p. 237. The difficulty would, perhaps, be removed, if we remembered habitually that the physical destinies of men are decided according to the laws of moral retribution. Self-love is as ineradicable from our nature as any other original instinct, and we are unacquainted with any respectable theory of morals which excludes it from the essence of virtue. Even the crude "love to being in general" of Edwards, would include self-love.

## THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 9, p. 237. You have misquoted the text. Exod. xx. 6,

reads "and shewing mercy," &c., which is not in the form of a promise, though a promise may be said to be implied.

## THE MANNA.

REPLICANT. In answer to QUERIST No. 10, p. 237. In Heb. ix. 4, "wherein was the golden pot that had manna," is part of the description of the original condition of the ark. If the manna was not in the ark in the time of Solomon, then it must have been removed. Probably it had been put into the treasury, along with the Book of the Law, which Moses commanded (Deut. xxxi. 26) to be put *in the side of the ark*, but which, in the reign of Josiah, was found in the treasury. (2 Chron. xxxiv. 14 15.)

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

## THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF STEPHEN CHARNOCK, B.D.; with an Introduction by REV. JAMES M'COSH, LL.D. Volume II. Edinburgh: James Nicol. London: James Nisbet & Co.

CHARNOCK we regard as amongst the most illustrious of the Puritan Divines. In natural abilities he had but few equals. He had an intellect penetrating in vision, dexterous in movement, and vast in embrace, and an imagination peopling his soul with creations, grand and ennobling. His attainments were equally distinguished. He was abreast of his age in scientific knowledge and metaphysical philosophy. With classical authorities he was well acquainted, and the writings of the fathers seemed familiar to him. But the word of God was the home of his soul; he lived in it, knew its compartments and their furniture. His discourses we regard as the choicest treasures of the theological literature of England. We are thankful to receive this beautiful edition of his invaluable productions.

SCRIPTURE AND SCIENCE NOT AT VARIANCE. By JOHN H. PRATT, M.A.,  
Archdeacon of Calcutta. London : Hatchard & Co.

THIS is the fifth edition of a work which we noticed and characterized some years ago. Of the present edition the learned author says,—“There are considerable additions and improvements in this issue. The proof-sheets of the fourth edition had passed through my hands before ‘Essays and Reviews’ reached Calcutta. In an appendix to that edition, subsequently written, I made some remarks upon Mr. Goodwin’s allusions to this treatise; but the present is the first opportunity which I have had of fully entering upon the objections which he has revived in his essay on Mosaic Cosmogony. The pages which treat upon the interpretation of the opening verses of Genesis, are accordingly re-written with a view to meet the present aspect of the controversy. A further illustration of the harmony of Scripture and Science, where they were thought to be at variance, is drawn from considerations regarding the uniformity of the Laws of Nature and the suspension of their operation in miracles. Dr. Colenso’s attack upon the Pentateuch also furnishes me with a new example of harmony between Scripture and Science. Additions are made in the parts which treat on the Unity of the Human Race; on the Unity of Language; on the Age of the Human Race, supposed to be affected by ancient astronomical observations, the Chinese being now considered as well as the Hindoo of the same, as indicated by flint remains, and advocated in Sir Charles Lyell’s recent work on the ‘Antiquity of Man.’ The way in which natural phenomena are referred to in Scripture, is more particularly explained, and is illustrated by remarks on the meaning of ‘sunrise,’ and ‘sunset.’ The analogy between the experience of the past in the removal of apparent discrepancies between Scripture and Science, and the just expectations of the future, which is the great argument my book is intended to exhibit and enforce, is somewhat more fully opened out. The Appendix which was attached to my last edition, containing observations on the hieroglyphic system and other matters of interest, is now incorporated with the text. Some new Notes, and also an Index are added.” This is a most valuable little work. It is a handbook charged with arguments and facts intended and sufficient to remove the objections which hostile criticism have brought against the Bible.

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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF REV. THOMAS RAFFLES, D.D.,  
LL.D. By STAMFORD RAFFLES, Esq., B.A. London : Jackson,  
Walford, & Hodder.

THE Independent denomination has, within the last few years, lost its greatest pulpit ornaments; men, the like of whom few, if any, remain. Hamilton, of Leeds; Jay, of Bath; James, of Birmingham; Raffles, of Liverpool, in the provinces. Harris, Leifchild, Sherman, Reed, and others, in the metropolis, some men of genius, all men of mark and might, are gone, and their

departure has wonderfully reduced the prestige of the denomination. In most cases, perhaps, more learned men have taken their place; but in few are there men of such royal natures and stately make. The open countenance, the emotional eye, the expansive brow, of Dr. Raffles, appeared before a congregation as a symbol of the grand message he was charged to deliver. About two years ago we preached with him at the ordination of a minister; it was the first time we had met him, and his cordial grasp, and loving greeting, won our hearts at once. We are glad to receive these memoirs of his life and history. His learned son has done his duty well as a biographer. His filial love has not led him to exaggerate excellencies or conceal defects. In truth, we rather wonder at the calmness. We should almost have expected pages written by a son of such a father would have been flooded with emotions. It is well, however, that it is otherwise. It is the just and discriminative estimate of character that makes the most salutary and lasting impression upon the mind of the reader. "It has been my aim throughout the book," says the author, "to leave the subject of the memoir to tell his own story, so far as was possible, in his own words." So that the lovers of Dr. Raffles can see him, and commune with him, in this very interesting volume.

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BRITISH NORTH AMERICA; with Maps. London: Religious Tract Society.

THE design of this volume seems to be, to give in a compendious form, trustworthy information respecting the history, condition, and prospects of British North America. The author, we are informed, has resided in more than one of the provinces which compose that vast territory, and has enjoyed special advantages for making himself acquainted with the circumstances of those that he had not visited. As British America is daily growing in value and importance to the mother-country, and thousands of our fellow-citizens are moving thitherward every year, such a work as this, presenting in a clear and condensed form its various aspects, cannot fail to be interesting and useful.

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AIREY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS; CARTWRIGHT ON THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS. Edinburgh: James Nicol. London: Nisbet & Co.

MR. NICOL, the enterprising publisher, of Edinburgh, has resolved upon reproducing certain important commentaries, as a supplemental series to standard divines of the Puritan period. The first is now before us, and a handsome volume it is. Crown quarto size, good paper, bold type, and well "got up." So far as we have been able to examine the work, we think it well worth disentanglement. It has thoughts that should be ungraved, unconfined, unswathed, and set to work in the world's spiritual reformation. The memoir of each author is from the talented and well-known pen of Mr. Grosart.



# A HOMILY

ON

The Dreams of Joseph ;

OR

The Visions of Youth, the Jealousy of  
Society, and the Destiny of Virtue.

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“And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren : and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed : for, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright ; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us ? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us ? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more ; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren : and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed ? shall I and thy mother and thy brethren come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth ? And his brethren envied him ; but his father observed the saying.”—Gen. xxxvii. 5—11.



WITH the history of Joseph, most in every congregation are supposed to be more or less familiar. It is written with such exquisite simplicity that a child can understand it ; it is so brief that it can be read in an hour ; and its dramatic interest is so bewitching, that if commenced it must be read to the end, and if once read through will not be easily forgotten. *Destined superiority to brethren and parents* is the one grand idea that comes out in the strange visions of the night recorded in the text.



First: *This idea was evidently a Divine communication.* It was felt to be so both by the dreamer and his family to whom he told it, and its realization in his future history, places the question beyond the reach of any reasonable doubt. The Eternal Spirit came to him in the stillness of the night, and in the reveries of nocturnal thought, gave him a presage of the earthly dignity that awaited him.

Secondly: *This idea was expressed at different periods and in different symbols.* There were two dreams to convey the one same idea. Whether the two occurred in the same sleep, or on the same night, does not appear, but they were distinct from each other in their forms and in the consciousness of the dreamer. The *symbols*, too, were different. The scene of one was a harvest field, in which he and his family were binding sheaves of golden grain. The strange rising of his own sheaf, and the erect posture which it assumed, and the circling of their sheaves about it, and their obeisance to it symbolized the idea in the one dream. The scene of the other was the vaulted firmament, where the sun and moon and eleven stars appeared, and where these heavenly luminaries, by some peculiar motion, expressed their homage to him. This obeisance of the orbs of night and monarch of the day was another symbol of the same idea, namely, his destined superiority to his family. Thus God speaks once, yea twice, unto men, and in various forms, and in divers manners. Nature and the Bible abound with examples of the infinite variety of method by which the Eternal Father of Spirits conveys the same great ideas to His rational offspring.

Thirdly: *This idea was felt by all to have a Divine significance.* Not only did Joseph tell it in a way that expressed his strong belief in its Divine import, but his father and brethren no sooner heard it than they felt the same belief. Why else did the hearts of his brethren flame at once with fresh envy, and why else did his old father say, "Shall I and my mother and thy brethren *indeed* come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

I shall look at these dreams as serving to illustrate the

visions of youth, the jealousy of society, and the destiny of virtue.

I. THE VISIONS OF YOUTH. Whilst the dreams convey a *Divine* idea, there is, undoubtedly, much of the human in them. God speaks and works through the human. Joseph was young, and had, perhaps, in his constitution a strong dash of that hopefulness and ambition which are found more or less in connection with all young people. He wished, perhaps, to become great, and the wish to a great extent was the father of his dreams. Dreams are frequently the children of our desires. The young generally create bright visions of the future. In the harvest field of their coming life, their sheaf is the royal one; in the firmament of their future, the leading luminaries shall bow to them. If in trade, they will be the great merchants; if in professions, their career will be brilliant; in marriage-life, their partners are to be paragons of excellence, their children incarnations of beauty, their home an abode of plenty, love, and peace. A sky without a cloud, an atmosphere without storms, a land flowing with milk and honey, are the inheritance of their future. This tendency to brighten the future belongs to youth. You cannot eradicate it. Read to the young lessons drawn from the experience of six thousand years of human sorrow, trial, and disappointment, their future shall be still bright—their case will be an exception—it will not happen to them as it has happened to all. Preach to them that most of the men that have ever lived and suffered had in youth the same bright visions as they, but were disappointed, and that the same disappointments will inevitably meet them, all your sermons will not bring a cloud over the firmament of their future. A tendency so universal, so ineradicable, must be a Divine implantation, and intended by the Creator for beneficent ends.

I can discover at least three purposes which this tendency in youth serves to answer.

First: *It serves to increase the amount of man's happiness on this earth.* This tendency brings from the future a world of

pleasure to the young heart, not the less in consciousness because purely imaginary. Our highest joys are in the ideal realm, the realm of our own thoughts, and fancies, and creations. It is only when we are driven down from this realm by the stern realities, and pressing duties, and harassing cares of our material life, that we feel our life to be a scene of trial and vexation of soul. The young, while young, remain there and are happy. We all remember, even the oldest of us, something of the joys and raptures of that land of poetry and dreams. Now, were it not for this joyous experience of young life, the sum of our individual happiness here would be greatly diminished. The way for me to estimate God's conduct towards me, is to put the joys of my youthhood against the trials of my manhood and my age.

Secondly : *It serves to supply a mighty stimulus to our mental powers.* The young feel instinctively that the bright things they hope for are dependent upon their efforts. Whatever be the chief attraction in their future, whether the honors of scholarship, the luxuries of wealth, the dignities of office, or the *eclat* of fame, they feel they can only be grasped by effort. Hence their powers are called into vigorous action. If the future which our young life painted corresponded exactly with all that our life turned out to be, I scarcely think we should struggle to reach it, and our powers, in whose full development our well-being consists, would remain in utter dormancy. The Jew in Egypt had nothing but Canaan held up to his imagination to stimulate his efforts for emancipation. Had the trials in the wilderness been held before him, he would have stuck to the flesh-pots in the land of his tyrants. Let the young have their lives revealed to them as they will actually be, and let them believe in that revelation, and where their powers would not be paralyzed by a view of the trials that awaited them, there would certainly be a loss of all impulse for activity. God seems to educate men by illusions. As of old, He held out to the patriarchs and to the prophets, promises which they struggled after, but died without receiving; so in all young life, He

permits bright things to loom in their imagination which they wrestle for but never reach, and in the wrestle is their use and their reward.

Thirdly : *It serves to intimate what human nature would have been had there been no sin.* Faith in a bright future is an instinct of the soul. As the eye implies light, this instinct implies future good, for would the All-good Creator have implanted in us faith in a good which had no existence. Our faith continues, but through sin we have lost the way to reach the object. I am disposed to believe that had not sin come into the world, there would have come to us all in this life far brighter and more joyous things than ever entered the most hopeful imagination of youth. How great the difference between the hopes of our youth and the realities of our life. Between the ideal and the actual in our experience, there is a yawning chasm dividing an Eden from a vale of tears. Sin dug out that awful chasm.

Such are some of the purposes which this tendency in youth to create bright visions of the future serves to answer, and who will not say that its uses justify its existence and its operations. I thank God that whilst I see age around me faithless and desponding in relation to the future, that young life is still full of faith and hope. What more refreshing to advanced manhood and infirm age than the beaming looks and bright dreams and poetic utterances of those who are living in youth's romantic world!

II. THE JEALOUSIES OF SOCIETY. "And his brethren said to him, shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words." It was the hatred of jealousy that these brethren evidently experienced. Jealousy is a passion that springs from the fear of a rival enjoying advantages which we desire for ourselves. Though nearly akin to envy, there is some difference between them. Jealousy is a fear that the rival will get the advantage we desire. Envy is a hatred because the advantage has been obtained. Jealousy burns towards the rival because he is

in the way to get the superiority. Envy burns towards him because he has won it.

I may make three remarks about this jealousy.

First : *It is very general.* We look at it burning in the heart of these brethren towards their brother, and we feel it to be an accursed thing ; but it is a prevalent passion in all circles of life. Let a man of your own class and from your own sphere of acquaintance be on the way of winning a position that you desire, and in you, if you are not a man of Christian nobility, this feeling will rise with more or less strength. Generally, the nearer the rival is connected with us, and the more intensely we desire the good he is about obtaining, will be the strength of the passion. As a rule, men are pained rather than pleased with the advancement of the men of their sphere and of their class ; they are more pleased in seeing them sinking a little lower than rising a little higher than themselves. Hence, we find it far more easy for men to weep with those that weep, than to rejoice with those that rejoice. It is less difficult to extract from some of the hardest natures a tear of sympathy for those of their own acquaintance and grade whom misfortune has overtaken, than it is to awaken even in the kindest hearts a genuine joy for those who have risen above them. Let your own brother reach a good which you are aspiring after, and would you heartily sympathize with the joy that floods his nature on account of his success ? The sinking man you may pity ; to the man who continues on your level you may give your friendship ; but the man who by his greater industry or superior genius climbs from your side the ladder of eminence, wakes within you that jealousy which is likely to turn all love into hate.

I observe that this feeling—

Secondly : *Is an unhappy feeling.* Of all the furies in the world of demon passions, jealousy is one of the most tormenting. It is

" Incessant gall,  
Corroding every thought, and blasting all  
Love's paradise."

Poetry has well-nigh exhausted the vocabulary of what is terrible in describing it. It is "the almighty tyrant of the human mind," the "merciless destroyer, more cruel than the grave," "the conflagration of the soul," "the king of torments," "the grand counterpoise for all the transports beauty can inspire," "the green-eyed monster," "a passion fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence—baneful as death, and horrible as hell." Even pious Hannah More seems to have felt it, and passionately exclaims,

"Oh, jealousy, thou ugliest fiend of hell !  
Thy deadly venom preys on my vitals,  
Turns the healthful hue of my fresh cheek to haggard sallowness,  
And drinks my spirit up."

It was this that made Haman miserable, though he occupied a seat above all the princes that were with him. "All this," said he, "availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's gate."

It is recorded in Grecian story that Theagenes, a citizen of Thasos, and a celebrated victor in the public games of Greece, had a famous statue raised to him by his countrymen, and that one of his rivals, inspired by this demon passion, went forth in the silence and darkness of night and endeavoured to throw it down by repeated blows. At last he succeeded, and before he could escape it fell from its pedestal and crushed him to death. This fact not only shows the restless torment of this passion, but symbolizes the doom of its possessor. He who seeks to destroy the glory of a rival crushes his own soul in the attempt.

I observe that this feeling—

Thirdly: *Is unchristian.* What has already been advanced is sufficient to show us that it is unchristian. Christianity is that spirit of benevolence that leads us to promote the good of others, and to rejoice in their success. Jealousy is the opposite to this. Solomon says, "it is the rage of a man, therefore will he not spare in the day of his vengeance?" Christianity says, "be kind to one another ;

tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave us."

So much then for the subject of jealousy, as suggested by our text. Does not this *general, unhappy, and unchristian* feeling indicate how far our souls have fallen from the standard and the spirit of goodness? Does it not show that there is no well-founded hope for the world's happiness without a thorough renovation of soul, that "unless man is born again he cannot enter into the kingdom" of true enjoyment?

III. THE DESTINY OF VIRTUE. Joseph's dreams were no delusion. The superiority they symbolized he reached; he became greater than his brothers, greater than his parents; he was set over all the land of Egypt; he received the obeisance of his family. When the famine raged throughout those regions, and Joseph had command of all the provisions of Egypt, we are told that Joseph's brethren came and "bowed down themselves before him to the earth." (Genesis lxii. 6.) Here is the dream fulfilled. The question which they put to him from jealousy when he narrated to them his dreams, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us, or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?" is here answered. Here they lay prostrate at his feet. Aye, the greatest luminaries of his age made their obeisance to him! The secular distinction that he reached was but the effect and expression of that moral distinction which he attained; he had won a sovereignty over his own passions, and obtained the favor of heaven. Why was he enabled to reach this distinction? Why was he enabled to realize the bright prospects of his youthful dreams? I answer, because of his *virtue*, for although he had many silent defects of character, he was virtuous in the main. Glory is ever the destiny of virtue.

First: *There is much in a virtuous life itself to ensure advancement.* The man whose soul is inspired with true sentiments, and is guided in everything by the principles of godliness, pursues a course that must lead to distinction. He has within

him the guarantees for *secular* advancement. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Intemperance, extravagance, improvidence and indolence, the fruitful sources of poverty, are expelled from the heart of a godly man, and principles of an opposite character, and working in an opposite direction, have taken their place and are regal within him. "Riches and honor are with me," says virtue. He has within him a guarantee for *intellectual* advancement. There is nothing like religion to remove the inertia of intellect, to sweep the soul's horizon of all the mists that obscure the vision, to lay open the fields of truth in all that variety of charm that shall rouse the mind into the activity of research and exploration. It is a guarantee for advancement in *social influence*. The more goodness a man has within him, the more real power he has over the souls of others. From the constitution of the human mind, the most wicked are compelled to feel an inward reverence for moral goodness wherever it is displayed. In the great harvest field of social life, the sheaves of wickedness gather round that of virtue and render obeisance. Thus virtue has in itself a guarantee. "The path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Secondly : *Advancement is pledged by God himself to a virtuous life*. "Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give the desire of thine heart." And again, "The Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." And again, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." And again, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father." Their destined position in the universe is that of kings and priests unto God. "They shall sit down on the throne of Christ, and shall receive a crown of glory that shall never fade away."

Learn, in conclusion, my young friends, from this *subject the fate of eminence*. If you are struggling



to excel in any department of life, in proportion to your success anticipate the fate which Joseph met with from his brethren. Society is morally low, and it has ever felt a jealousy towards those of its children who work their way above its level. Heed not this jealousy, but march onward. Heed it not, though it hiss at you with the venom of a serpent, or speak about you with the tongue of slander and detraction. Heed it not, it is the penalty that greatness has ever had to pay in our world. It was directed by the rulers of the nation against even Christ Himself. Heed it not; it is a thousand times better to be the object of those vile passions, than to feel them rankling in your heart. Heed it not, for Christ has given His disciples reason to expect it. "The servant is not greater than his Lord, if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

Learn also, my young friends, from this subject *the path of glory*. Would you have more than the brightest dreams of your youth realized in the future. "Then get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding. Exalt her and she shall bring thee to honour." It is not by talent, however great; not by genius, however brilliant; not by industry, however untiring, that a glorious future will be reached. There is but one path to a bright future. The path of virtue is the path of glory. Enter this path now. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." The beginning may be difficult, but the end will be everlasting life. A few years, should you be spared, and you will have to leave that romantic world of youth in which you are now living. From the flowery lawns, ambrosial bowers, balmy airs, and elysian scenes of poetry, you must step into the rough and dusty road of the world's stern realities. You will have to breathe the bleak winds of a selfish age, be beaten by those storms of disappointment and trial that will wreck your favorite projects, and work under a sky dark and cold with mercenary influences. Before that period comes—before the day of youthhood is over, "enter in at the strait gate."

Enter now, before prejudice shall warp your judgment, and

habit fetter your will, and sin steel your conscience and pollute the fountain of your being. Enter now, before secular concerns engross your energies and absorb your time. Enter now, whilst those mystic nerves of your nature which connect you with God and His moral system are so exquisitely tender that they thrill to the Divine voices of duty and of love. Enter now; you have not a moment you can call your own. Death is approaching, and the Judge standeth at the door; and the dawn of eternity is about breaking on your being.

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## A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

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Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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### SECTION SIXTEENTH.—Acts vi. 1—7.

“And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when

they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."—Acts vi. 1—7.

SUBJECT :—*The First Election of Deacons.*

**A** TERRIBLE evil is referred to in the first verse, in most respects a worse evil than had hitherto happened to the first church, namely, DISSENSION WITHIN. Hitherto, there had been furious storms without, but the utmost concord within. They "were of one heart and of one soul." The parties now contending were Grecians and Hebrews. The *Grecians* were Hellenists, not Greeks, but Jews using the Greek language in their worship, Greek-speaking Jews who had been converted to Christianity and joined the new church. The *Hebrews* were natives of Palestine, and others who used the Hebrew Scriptures, genuine Jews in all respects. The *subject* of contention, was the neglect of widows "in the daily ministration." It was said by some that there was something like favoritism in the distribution of the charities of the church, that the widows of the Hellenist Christians were neglected. Whether this was a fact or not there must have been a great danger of it in that new communion. The native Jews or the Hebrews would, of course, be far the most numerous, and the ties of country and language would give them a special interest in each other, and this might have led to a partiality in the distribution of the church's temporal favors. The expression of discontent was a "murmuring," a suppressed grumble. This is a form which social discontent frequently takes, and it is for many reasons the most vile and pernicious. The church-member who speaks out his discontent audibly, fully, frankly, is a noble character compared with him who goes about murmuring, groaning, whispering out his miserable spirit. *This first dissension within the church* was the immediate occasion for the election of a new class of officers called "deacons." This passage gives us an account of their election, and leads us to consider

*the reason of their election, the method of their election, the qualification for their election, and the usefulness of their election.*

I. THE REASON OF THEIR ELECTION. Two things make plain the reason why this office was now called into existence, and they are here referred to.

First : *The temporal necessities of the poor members of the church.* There were many poor in that new and large community ; many who were dependent, perhaps almost entirely, for their support on the public funds. "*Widows*" are especially mentioned here, and they, as a rule, in all communities are the most abject and the most deserving aid ; and the Bible especially commends them to the compassion of the benevolent. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." It is the duty of the church to attend to the temporal as well as the spiritual necessities of its members. In this, Christ left us an example ; and we are commanded to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Secondly : *The absorbing work of the Gospel ministry.* This the "twelve apostles" referred to as a reason. "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." "Serve tables," means attending on tables, and figuratively expresses the temporal administration that was necessary ; and it may include not only the distribution of the funds of the church among its poorer members, but the entire management of all its temporalities. Up to this time it seems that the apostles had attended to this—they had looked to the poor, they had attended to the widows. But their spiritual work now was becoming too absorbing, and they felt that it was neither right nor proper that they should in any way neglect the spiritual for the temporal. Hence the election of deacons. They were elected, not to *rule*, as some arrogant modern deacons fancy. Their work was a subordinate one, merely to take care of the finances, as the

almoners of the public bounty. Nor were they elected to *preach and publicly pray* as some modern deacons also think. All who were qualified to preach, should preach, and all should pray ; but these are no more the offices of deacons than of any private member.

II. THE METHOD OF THEIR ELECTION. In their election the church and the apostles had their different parts to fulfil.

First: *The church had its part.* The multitude of the disciples were called together. The aggregate body assembled in order to act in their corporate capacity. They had first to look out for seven men, the most suitable for the work amongst them. They were to make inquiries, and use their best judgment in discovering the most eligible persons. Having discovered them, they were then to choose them. Each one was to exercise his best judgment, and conscientiously give his vote.

Secondly: *The apostles had their part.* What did the apostles do in the matter? (1) They *originated* the election. The suggestion for new officers came from them, not from the members ; and they, not the members, called the church together for the purpose. (2) They *directed* the election. Though they did not, perhaps, formally nominate the men for the office, they did that which was more important and equally influential, *described the character of the men*, held up to the multitude their moral portraits, and said, "We want men like this picture." "Seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." (3) They *confirmed* the election. The men the Church elected, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, &c., they "set before the apostles." What for? That the apostles might ordain them. Had they not been up to the apostles' idea, answered to the qualifications they had laid down, would they have ordained them? I trow not. They undoubtedly had the veto—the power of accepting or rejecting the choice of the church. The apostles in this case, however, accepted that choice. "And when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Amongst the Jews

it was customary to lay hands on the heads of any persons who were set apart for any particular office. (Gen. xlviii. 14, 18 ; Num. xxvii. 18 ; Acts viii. 17, &c.)

II. THE QUALIFICATION FOR THEIR ELECTION. There are three qualifications stated here. First : *Unblemished reputation*. "Men of honest report," that is, men universally regarded as men of integrity, whose characters were above suspicion, whose reputation stood before the world without a stain.

Secondly : *Eminently godly*. "Full of the Holy Ghost." Full of the thoughts and purposes of the Gospel : under the domination of Christianity.

Thirdly : *Practical sagacity*. "Wisdom." They were to be men who had an aptitude for the work ; who could distinguish between the merits of cases ; administer the charities with judgment and equity. Paul more fully describes these qualifications. (1 Tim. iii.)

IV. THE RESULT OF THEIR ELECTION. "And the word of God increased ; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly ; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." "It seems," says Dr. Alexander, "to be implied, though not explicitly affirmed, that this effect was promoted by the measure just before described—the ordination of the seven almoners or deacons." It may have operated thus in several ways.

First : *By quelling the spirit of contention*. This spirit would, of course, act as an obstruction to the advancement of the church.

Secondly : *By the augmented agency of the church*. Seven noble men set to work.

Thirdly : *By enabling the apostles to give themselves entirely to preaching the Gospel*. In this way the election contributed to the extension of the church.

It is said that "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." This is stated as something remarkable.

## Gems of Thought.

SUBJECT:—*Philip and the Eunuch : a Remarkable Meeting.*

“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgement was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.”—Acts viii. 26—40.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Seventy-third.

**T**HIS fragment of Divine history informs us of a *meeting* very noteworthy on many accounts. It was—

I. A MEETING OF TWO VERY REMARKABLE MEN,—Philip and the eunuch. Each of these men stood out amongst his contemporaries as a marked man. They were not of the

millions that are lost in the crowd and that flow with the stream. One was distinguished by his high political position, the other by his adherence to a new faith, and his advocacy of doctrines that clashed with the general opinions of his age. Philip was one of the first seven deacons, (Acts vi. 5) whose office it was to serve tables; he combined with the office of a deacon that of an evangelist, (Acts xxi. 8) whose office it was to preach the gospel from place to place. (Eph. iv. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 5.) The persecution that broke out at Jerusalem and which led to the martyrdom of Stephen, caused him to flee to Samaria for refuge. Here, in a city where Simon Magus resided, he preached "things concerning the kingdom of God," and here also he performed great miracles, which prepared the minds of the people for the reception of the gospel. (Acts viii. 6.) As soon as Peter and John had come to Samaria to carry on and complete the work which Philip commenced there, our evangelist, we are informed, was directed by a Divine impulse to proceed towards Gaza, where he met with the eunuch, and where the incidents recorded in this paragraph occurred. We read of him in subsequent parts of this book; his history may thus be summed up: he was a practical believer in Christ, he was honored by the church in being elected as one of the seven deacons; he was called by the Spirit to be an evangelist to go from place to place preaching the Gospel, and he was endowed with the power of working miracles. The eunuch, we are told, was a man of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. There are two countries called Ethiopia, one in Asia and one in Africa. This was the one in Africa, lying south of Egypt. *Candace* was not a personal but an official name, the title of the female sovereign of Ethiopia, as *Cæsar* was the name of the emperor of Rome, and *Pharaoh* of Egypt. This eunuch, it would seem, had immense influence over her, was royal chamberlain of her household, intrusted with all her treasures, and, perhaps, her secrets too. He was the greatest man in the kingdom. The fact that he had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was found reading in his chariot the Hebrew



Scriptures, shows that he was a Jew, either by birth or by proselytism, probably the latter. The Jews, from all parts of the world, were in ancient times accustomed to attend the religious feasts at Jerusalem. This eunuch had been at one of those feasts and was returning. These were the two men that now met; confessedly, no ordinary men. In appearance and in worldly possession they greatly differed. Philip was poor, without wealth, social status or political power, under a hot sun prosecuting his journey on the dusty roads on foot. The great Divine ideas with which his soul was charged, helped no doubt to bear him on and make his journey light. The eunuch was an affluent man, high in office and great in his country's esteem; he was wending his way homeward, not on foot, but in a chariot, provided with all that the civilisation of his age could supply to make his journey pleasant. These were the men that met. It was—

II. A MEETING BROUGHT ABOUT BY EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES. The circumstances that brought these two remarkable men together, not merely in body but in soul, are so extraordinary as to give something of a romantic character to the event. It was—

First: *The direction of Philip to Gaza.* What induced Philip to go to Gaza, one of the five old Philistine cities, whose gates the famous Samson once bore away and which was now "desert?" The twenty-sixth verse answers the question. "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." He did not decide on the journey by his own reasoning, nor by the advice of a fellow man, but a messenger from heaven came to him, "an angel of the Lord." Who, or what the messenger was, a celestial intelligence or an inward suggestion by the Divine Spirit, is an open question. One thing is clear, that the direction came from God, and Philip felt it to be so, and hence at once obeyed the mandate. He was not disobedient to the heavenly voice. He was directed this way most

probably for the very purpose of meeting this lord chamberlain, to instruct him in the gospel, in order that he might become an influential preacher to the sable sons of Ethiopia.

Another extraordinary circumstance which brought about this meeting was—

Secondly: *The occupation of the eunuch in his chariot.* "He was reading Esaias the prophet." Most likely the version of Scriptures he was reading from was the Greek or Septuagint, a translation of the Scriptures which was made in Egypt for the special use of the Jews in Alexandria and throughout Egypt, and which was in general circulation. Why was he reading it? Was it to relieve the tedium of the journey? If so, he could not have done anything better. The Bible, as a literary production, has charms to interest that transcend all the highest efforts of human genius. Travellers on long journeys would find it far more interesting, to say nothing else, than the trash they purchase on railway stalls. Or was it for the purpose of intellectual culture? Did he wish to give vigor to his intellect, and buoyancy to his imagination? He could not do better than to read the Scriptures. No book on earth furnishes such helps to mind as the Bible. Or was it to store his mind with the knowledge of the true principles of social order and political government? If so, he adopted the wisest course. Or was it in obedience to the Jewish Rabbis, who directed that "when any one was going on a journey and had not a companion, he should study the law?" Or was it because he had just heard in Jerusalem so much about the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ, and also the wonders of the Pentecost, that he was determined to search the Scriptures in order to see whether He was the true Messiah or not? Whatever might have been his particular reasons I know not. It is with the fact we have to do; inasmuch as it was that which brought him into contact with Philip. The narrative gives the impression that had not Philip seen this eunuch with the Scriptures in his hand and heard him read, he might have passed him by and there would have been no meeting. The

Bible was the magnet that drew the heart of the evangelist to the chamberlain.

The other extraordinary circumstance which brought about this meeting was—

Thirdly : *The strange impulse that prompted Philip to join the chariot.* “Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.” The impulse to join the eunuch in his chariot is here ascribed to the Spirit, that is the Spirit of God. The reading of the Bible perhaps first attracted Philip’s attention, and the Spirit started the impulse to join him. In truth, without a Divine impulse, it is scarcely likely that a poor pedestrain like Philip would have ventured to have rushed to this nobleman, and have asked the question, “understandest thou what thou readest ?” There is something more than human in this boldness.

Such are the circumstances that brought about this meeting. They are not fortuitous occurrences or accidental coincidences. There is a divinity in them, a divinity originating and directing them. God is in all history originating the good and controlling the bad. It was—

III. A MEETING TURNED TO RARE SPIRITUAL ACCOUNT. Coming together what did they do? Discuss politics or converse on the common-place topics of the day? No! They commence an earnest talk about God’s Scriptures. Philip said, “Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.” Two things now took place.

First : *The eunuch was enlightened by Philip.* Two things are necessary in order for one man spiritually to enlighten another. (1) There must be on the part of one a disposition to receive knowledge. This the eunuch now possessed. He said, “How can I, except some man should guide me. And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.” He felt his ignorance, and confessed it. In his swarthy bosom there was a strong desire for more light, hence he

seized this opportunity. Had he not had this disposition, Philip's expositions, if listened to, would have been of no service whatever. A consciousness of ignorance is the alphabet of knowledge. (2) There must be on the part of the other a power to impart knowledge. Philip had this. He knew Christ; and knowing Christ, he could explain the passage which the eunuch seems to have been reading, but which he could not understand. The passage was as follows:—"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter," &c. It is quoted, not from the Hebrew, but from the Septuagint version. The question which the eunuch raised on the passage, was not whether it was the word of God or not, but to whom did the words refer. "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" Just the question this, on which Philip was at home, and to which he was prepared at once to give a full answer. He "opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." He shewed, perhaps, how exactly the history of Jesus answered to the prophet's description, and how He was indeed the Messiah of the Old Testament. The biography of Jesus is the key to interpret the writings of the prophets. *He "preached unto him Jesus."* He did not preach a *creed*, but *Christ* as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. His sermon is not reported. We have nothing more than his text, and his grand theme—Jesus. This seems to have solved the moral questions of the eunuch, to have satisfied the cravings of his nature, and to have effected the salvation of his soul; for "he went on his way rejoicing."

Secondly: *The eunuch was baptized by Philip.* "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" There is nothing in these verses (36—39) to show certain things about baptism that are held with earnestness by a certain body of Christians. The passage does not teach—(1) That baptism is an obligation. There is no proof that Philip enjoined baptism on the eunuch, or that *he said a word about it*; indeed it seems that the sudden sight

of water suggested the thought to the eunuch's mind. Being a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and having been baptized when he joined that religion, he perhaps thought that now he was joining a new religion he should be baptized again. We do not say—for we believe otherwise—that baptism is not a duty for some; all we say, that these verses do not teach it. The verses do not teach—(2) That baptism is to be performed by immersion. We do not say that immersion is not the right way; we say there is nothing in this passage to teach it. (1) The reference to the water does not teach it. "Certain water." Hundreds of travellers have visited this spot in order to see whether there was sufficient water for immersion, and not one has discovered such. (2) The words employed do not teach it. "And they went down both into the water. . . . And when they were come up out of the water." The preposition *εἰς*, here translated *into*, is translated in other parts of the Bible no less than 538 times by *to* and *into*; and the preposition *ἐκ*, *out of*, is translated *from* nearly 200 times in other places. So all that the words mean is, that they went to the water and came from it; and they apply to Philip as well as the eunuch. If they mean dipping to the eunuch, they mean dipping to Philip; but they mean no such thing. The words do not teach—(3) That baptism is only for believers. It is very true here that Philip is reported to have said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," and the eunuch to have replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" but this passage is an interpolation—it is not in the original Scriptures. Dean Alford, in his Greek Testament, says on this interpolation, that "the insertion appears to have been made to *suit the formularies of the baptismal liturgies*, it being considered strange that the eunuch should have been baptized without some such confession." And Webster and Wilkinson, no mean authorities, remark that "this verse is wanting in the best manuscripts, and is generally regarded as an interpolation.\* Its insertion in the text, marks the

\* It is omitted by Lachmann and Tischendorf: it is wanting in the Codex Sinaiticus.

progress made in the importance attached to forms of profession in the administration of the sacraments."

So much for the baptismal reference of the passage, which leaves the question of baptism, as to its mode and subject, open to be settled, if settled at all, by other passages. It was—

IV. A MEETING WHOSE TERMINATION WAS SUBLIMELY HAPPY. All meetings on earth have their termination, some end in sorrow.

First: *It was happy to Philip.* "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more." The Spirit that had suggested to Philip to meet the eunuch and to speak to him, now suggested his departure. "He was caught away." There is no need of supposing, as some have entertained, that he was borne away in the air by miraculous agency, all that is meant is, that he was strongly impelled by the Spirit. Such powerful impulses were awakened within him that he could not but go. Such impulses he required no doubt to effect his separation, for his connection with the eunuch had become close and strong. He was directed to Azotus, the Greek name for the city of Ashdod, about thirty miles from Gaza; and thence he proceeded and preached in all the cities until he came to Cæsarea. He had fulfilled his mission with the eunuch, and he proceeded by Divine impulse to work out the Divine will in relation to others. Thus moving away by the influence of God from the eunuch, Philip must have felt sublimely happy.

Secondly: *It was happy to the eunuch.* "He went on his way rejoicing." And well he might rejoice. The Bible had become a new book to him. A Divine light had fallen on its pages, that gave it a meaning he never understood before, a charm he never felt before. He had found Him, Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. *Rejoicing*, for he was full of love to that Jesus whom Philip preached to him; *rejoicing*, for he felt that he had a wonderful blessing to impart to his sable countrymen.

Thus they parted, the one to go home in stately pomp to

be welcomed by his countrymen with marks of honor and distinction, the other to go as a poor evangelist into strange regions to deliver a message, which would rouse against him obliquy and ire. Thus they parted, never again perhaps to meet on this earth, but both anticipating a joyous meeting in the holy heavens above.

In conclusion, the subject suggests a lesson to those of you who have not yet experimentally understood the meaning of God's Holy Scriptures. Study them, as did the eunuch, with an earnest heart and an enquiring mind; if you do so, God will send some Philip to you, who shall give you that for which your natures crave. It suggests a lesson to those who experimentally know Jesus. Go and preach Christ to men as Philip did.



SUBJECT :—*Christ and the Woman of Samaria.*

"And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he

whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that *Messias* cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."—John iv. 4—26.

*Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Seventy-fourth.*

**I** HAVE discoursed on certain parts of this wonderful narrative before,\* but I take the whole now for a most important practical purpose. It may be well, however, before going to the direct object I have in view, to say a word concerning the *place* and *time* of this most remarkable meeting between Christ and the woman of Samaria. The place is fully described in the 5th verse. "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar." In the Old Testament this Sychar was called Shechem. (Gen. xii. 6.) It lies about thirty-four miles north of Jerusalem, and about fifteen miles south of the city of Samaria, in the narrow gorge between mount Gebal and Gerizim. As you enter the gorge from the south, you come upon Jacob's well. A church was once erected to mark this sacred spot, and the granite ruins lie there still. Samaritans, Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, all agree that this is the site of Jacob's well and Joseph's tomb. In Gen. xxxiii. 19, there is an account of Jacob's purchase of a field near Shechem; and in Josh. xxiv. 32, we find that Joseph was actually buried in that field. Here, on this ancient spot, hallowed in the associations of every descendant of the old patriarchs, Jesus now met this woman of Samaria

\* See "Homilist," New Series, Vol. III., p. 365. New Series, Vol. IV., p. 325.



on his way to Galilee. As to the *time*, we are told it was the sixth hour—that is, about twelve o'clock at noon—the hour when the sun was at its height, and when water, therefore, would be doubly precious to the traveller on his road; and we read, that “Jesus being wearied with his journey, sat on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.”

Now, our present purpose, in connection with this narrative, is to point out the way in which the Heavenly Teacher takes hold upon the dark and the depraved mind of the poor woman in order to raise her to intelligence, to worship, and to eternal life. How to get at the masses, how to get the lower classes—as they are called—interested in spiritual and eternal realities, is the question that agitates most churches in the present day, and presses especially upon the heart of every earnest minister of Jesus Christ. The toiling millions of this country are confessedly outside of all churches, and for the most part out of sympathy with those things which are essential to spiritual culture and everlasting peace. Scheme after scheme is propounded in order to reach them, and bring these wandering sheep into the fold. Theatres are open for religious services, tales are introduced into religious journals in order to make—as is unwisely hoped—spiritual truth more palatable, ministers deliver secular lectures to the working classes, and exhaust their wit and their humor to make them interesting and attractive. In some cases, amongst the smaller-brained and the more mawkish-hearted of the religious world, efforts are adopted so ineffably silly as only to awaken the disgust of the more thoughtful of the working classes. Even the pulpit itself, in some cases, has been employed as the organ of miserable clap-trap, coarse humor, and silly jests. A work entitled “Punch and the Pulpit” has actually been written, exposing the abominations of such iniquity.

Now, all these efforts employed more or less by good men, from the wiser to the most foolish of them, show how deeply the necessity and importance of winning over the millions to religion is felt, and how unsettled the best are as to the most effective scheme. In this respect, as in all departments of

holy labor, I take Christ to be our example. If an effective plan is to be obtained at all, it must be got from His life, for He came to seek and to save the lost. *In His conduct to the woman of Samaria now at Jacob's well, we may learn the true method of reclaiming the degraded poor.* Let us, then, carefully examine His conduct. How did He act towards her?

I. HE APPROACHED HER ON THE BROAD GROUND OF HUMANITY. He did not approach her as *poor*, by referring to her social condition and class, nor as a *Samaritan*, by referring to her religious prejudices and sect, but He approaches her as a *woman*, one inheriting human nature with all its wondrous potentialities, solemn relations, and deep spiritual wants.

First: *He asks a favor of her, and thus assures her that He does not despise her on the ground of her poverty.* "Jesus saith unto her, give me to drink." It has been said that "few things so touch the degraded and despised as asking a favor at their hands." If a man in the most elevated station of life would touch my heart, and win my sympathies, he would do it more effectively by condescending to ask me a service, than in generously bestowing one. His gift to me would leave me feeling the distance still between us; but my gift to him, if he entered my humble cottage and sought it at my hands, would make me feel that he stood with me on the common level of our nature. You honor a man a great deal more by receiving his favors than in conferring upon him your own. You feel often humbled in the reception of a gift, but always exalted in the bestowment of one. Enter a poor man's cottage, sit at his board, and take from him the humblest of his fare, and he will feel that you have done more to honor his nature than if you had conferred upon him a costly donation. Christ knew human nature; and hence to make this woman feel at once on a level with Him, He asks her the favor of a little water. Man, however poor, has self-respect, and has an ineradicable desire to be *honored by his compeers*; and from those whom he thinks

despise him, he shrinks with loathing and disgust. The church now practically despises poverty, and hence the gulf between it and the millions. The church forms her institution so as to become independent of the poor; their voluntary offerings are not sought, as if their mite was not worth having. Sermons are constructed for the poor, as if they had not sufficient common sense to understand the average productions of the pulpit of this age. Religious services are got up for the poor, as if they were unworthy to mingle with others in their devotions. These efforts, assuredly, have in themselves no strong tendency—to say the least—of removing from the heart of the poor the feeling that they are despised. Let us learn to open the heart of the poor as Christ opened it, by endeavoring to get some service which they can render, if not of money, of mind.

Secondly : *He asks a favor of her, though a Samaritan, and thus assures her that He does not despise her on the ground of her sect.* Between the Jews and Samaritans there had been for ages a deep mutual hostility on account of their religion. The ill-feeling sprung up among them at the building of Zerubbabel's temple. So wide-spread and influential was the enmity, that the Jews were not allowed to have any dealings with the Samaritans. Christ, as man, by birth was a Jew, and the woman recognized the fact. There was something perhaps in His costume, features, or aspect that assured her he was a Jew, and hence her astonishment that he should ask of her a favor. "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." As if she had said, the Jew has always despised us, regarded us with contempt and indignation, and yet thou askest a favor of me. She must have felt that the Jew before her did not despise her on account of her religion, and this must have disposed her heart to have listened to what He said. Christ, though a Jew by birth, was not a Jew in soul. None of the narrow prejudice of the Jew, and sectarian feelings of the Jew, were found in His heart. He was the true "Son of Man," and was

superior to all the distinctions of race, country, or sect. He did not shun the woman because of her religious peculiarities, nor did He condescend to notice them. His aim was to give her the true thought, spirit, and life. Herein we should imitate Him, if we would raise the degraded. We should not go to the poor as Catholics, Churchmen, or Dissenters, but as ministers of Christ, knowing nothing among men save, "Jesus Christ and him crucified." The feeling of the old Jew, in relation to the Samaritans, has ever been too prevalent in the church. The Catholics despise the Protestants, and the Protestants, the Catholics; Churchmen, Nonconformists; and Nonconformists, Churchmen. The men who differ from us in opinion, it is even fashionable for the pulpit to insult and denounce. This is not the way to win souls, it is not the way that Christ acted.

Another thing observable and demanding our attention in His method is—

II. HE PROPOUNDED TO HER SALVATION IN A WAY WHICH MADE HER FEEL ITS NECESSITY. "Jesus answered and said unto her, if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." He propounded the blessing *immediately*. No preliminary remarks, no reference to any other subject; an opportunity occurred for introducing the subject of salvation, and He did it *at once*. That, of all wants, was the greatest want of that poor woman; that of all subjects was the most dominant and absorbing subject in His mind, and that at once He urges on her attention. He did it *intelligibly* by employing imagery, with which she was perfectly familiar. The "well" was before her, and for that refreshing element she came. He speaks of salvation as water of a higher nature. She knew that water was a life-giving, thirst-satisfying, nature-cleansing power, the most valuable thing in the material world, and He gives her to understand that there was something better than that, a water that is the especial gift of God, which would quench the thirst of her soul,

and be in her as a fountain of blessedness, springing up unto everlasting life. He propounded it *suggestively*. The way in which He spoke of it filled her with new interest, and set her mind to work. She asks for information, "Whence hast thou that living water?" How did it come to thee? And who art thou? "Art thou greater than our father Jacob which gave us the well?" Thus He touched within her the springs of intellect, and set her thinking upon subjects which had never, perhaps, occupied her attention before. The religious teacher has done nothing with his hearers, unless he breaks the monotony of thought, and sets the mind on enquiry concerning duty and destiny. He propounded it *impressively*. In answer to her questions He utters these impressive words, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." How sublime His language! It transcends all human conceptions; it is full of Divinity. To us, as we read the words, they have a grand impressiveness, but as they came from the lips of Christ fresh on the ear of the woman, with His eye fixed on her, how deeply she must have felt them. It turned her questions into prayer, "Give me this water." This is effective teaching. Our object with sinners should be so to present the truth, both in our private conversations and in public discourses, that the hearer should exclaim, "Give me this water." Unless this is the result of our sermons, we do but little good, our preaching is vain. Our object should be to make men feel that the Gospel is as great a necessity to the human soul, as water is to the body. This Christ did.

Another thing observable and demanding our attention is—

III. HE SO TOUCHED ON HER HISTORY THAT SHE FELT THE DIVINITY OF HIS MISSION. "Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband."

in that saidst thou truly." Thus He touched her conscience, called up to her the memory of her sins, and prepared her by contrition to receive the water of everlasting life. He did not condemn her ; no word of denunciation escapes His lips. He holds the mirror of her depraved life before her, bids her look and compelled her to condemn herself. This treatment made her feel herself in the presence of One who read her through and through, knew her thoroughly and she exclaims, "I perceive that thou art a prophet." It is common for religious teachers to denounce sinners, brand them with hard names, and thunder damnation in their ears. But this will never make the sinner feel the divinity of your mission. Touch on their history as Christ did, that their lives shall re-appear to themselves for their own conscience to judge and condemn, and they will be likely to feel that you are a messenger from God. It was thus that Nathan brought David to condemn himself and prepare him for the reception of forgiveness. Oh for the skill so to treat sinners that they shall feel we are sent of God ; that we are in God's place and they inwardly feel concerning us, "I perceive that thou art a prophet." When this is the case they will listen to us as the ministers of God.

Another thing observable and demanding our attention in this method is—

IV. HE GAVE SUCH A REVELATION OF WORSHIP AND HIMSELF AS SILENCED HER CONTROVERSY. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain ; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Here she indicates a disposition to go into discussion as to the merits of various places of worship. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," that is, mount Gerizim ; to which perhaps she pointed, a mountain rising very near to Jacob's well and overlooking the tower of Sychar. On the summit the Samaritans had reared their temple, while the Jews worshipped at Jerusalem. Half-educated minds are always fond of controversy. The less the spirit of religion one has, the more disposed the intellect is to discuss the letter and the ritual. *Christ puts an end to this.*

First : *By a revelation of true worship.* He gives the true Object and Mode of worship. The Object is a Spirit, a Father ; and the Mode is to be in spirit and reality. Such a theory of worship as this was sufficient to dissipate all ideas of place, period, or ritual in connection with worship. Before the true idea of worship, your conventicles and churches, your Gerizims and Jerusalems dwindle into insignificance. "God is a Spirit."

Secondly : *By a revelation of His own Messiahship.* "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ : when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." I am He that your Moses referred to ; I am He to whom the rites and ceremonies of your own religion point. I can tell you all about worship, and I tell you that "God is a Spirit," &c. Would that the church followed Christ in this respect, and gave people to understand that the worship God required was not a service confined to time, or place, or ritual, but a service to be rendered everywhere and in all circumstances.

Thus we have briefly indicated the way in which Christ effected the spiritual restoration of this poor ignorant Samaritan, and could a policy more adapted have been pursued. He approaches her on the common ground of human nature. He propounds salvation to her in a way that made her feel its necessity. He so touched upon her history, that she felt the Divinity of His mission, and He gave such a revelation of worship and Himself, that He silenced all controversy about minor matters.



SUBJECT :—*True Spiritual Progress.*

"They go from strength to strength."—Psalm lxxxiv. 7.

Analysis of Homily the Six Hundred and Seventy-fifth.

**P**ROGRESS is the order of the day. It pervades everything. It is found in every walk of life. It is breaking up many of our old stereotype notions, and is forcing into notice and practice the newest and best discoveries. Progress

is written on the fabrics that issue from our looms—on the necessities and refinements of life, in fact, almost, on everything we see, touch, and enjoy. All this is done silently. On it goes, like the flow of a deep broad river. Earnest souls have not time to make a flourish of trumpets every upward step they take. They are more anxious about the advance than the noise they make, or the eyes they attract. This is a hopeful sign for the world, and one in which all the wise and good must rejoice. No one who can appreciate the present would wish to return to mediæval barbarism, or fall into Asiatic unchangeableness. Who would not wish our age to be progressive in the useful, the beautiful, and great. So it is pleasant to see individuals progress—to see them rise step by step to the attainment of some great and worthy object. With what delight must God look upon the soul in its Divine advancement approaching nearer to Him, the perfect One. We think the writer of our text had such progress as this in view, and it is this we shall endeavor to illustrate.

Notice the *character* of this Spiritual Progress. "From strength to strength." That is, from one degree of strength to another, or they gather fresh vigor as they proceed in their journey. It is worthy of notice, that the Christian's starting point is strength "from strength." The foundation he stands upon is strength. The hand that holds him is strength. And God that bids him go forward is strength. He has strength within, as well as without. No sooner did he see God's unspeakable love—the unfading glory and wondrous merit of the great atonement—no sooner did the grace of Christ rush into his soul, than he felt "like a strong man to run a race." This was the commencement. Then his heart was full. His gaze fixed on the man Christ Jesus. Firm was his step and humble his heart, resting trustingly on the "Rock of Ages." Such was the auspicious beginning, bidding fair soon to reach the summit of perfection. He seems to leap, to bound forward with an *angel's strength*. But as we look at him, we perceive that his



speed and strength are less. No vaulting now ; no running even. But we see what is far better perhaps, the slow, measured pace of real progress. Observe that the believer's progress is *Slow, Toilsome, and Certain*.

I. It is SLOW. From step to step. He does not leap at one bound into the perfect state. He is aptly compared to a traveller. Every inch of the road must be gone over, step after step must be taken. High hills and deep valleys, he will find. Up the one he *cannot* run, and down the other he *dare* not ; now and then he has to stand and fight his enemies, or he takes a by path like Bunyan's Pilgrim, which impede his progress. Holiness and heaven are to be obtained slowly—little by little. If we cannot fly or run we must be willing to climb and walk, thankful to go forward, though slowly.

II. It is TOILSOME. It is not only *slow* work, but *hard* work. The ascent is difficult and dangerous, like the ascent of some ice-bound mountains. Painfully does the traveller move upwards. The road with everyone may not be as difficult as we have described it, but every one will find it toilsome enough. How wearily he goes onward. What are those burdens we see upon him ? They are doubts and fears. He ought to have left them at the foot of the cross. Thus he has burdened *himself*, and he feels how painful the march is. Who has not felt how difficult it is, to advance Christward and heavenward—"to grow in grace." Through what glowing fires he has to pass before Christ, the great refiner, can look upon him, and see His own perfect countenance.

The following lines are as true in regard to spiritual progress as they are to worldly progress :—

"We have not wings, we cannot soar ;  
But we have feet to scale and climb,  
By slow degrees, by more and more  
The cloudy summits of our time.

"The mighty pyramids of stone  
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,  
When nearer seen and better known  
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

"The distant mountains that uprear  
Their solid bastions to the skies,  
Are crossed by pathways, that appear  
As we to higher levels rise.

"The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept  
Were toiling upward in the night."

But this progress is not only slow and toilsome—

III. It is CERTAIN. "They *go* from strength to strength." The movement may be as slow as possible, but it is progress. They rise. They are nearer heaven. They have more of Christ's likeness. Like the Jews, they may be led round about in the wilderness, but they are nearing home—the holy land. They fall, but rise again, and by His help spring forward and press onward. Thus they take step after step, as though every one would be their last. Yet upward they go, and though slow their progress, it is marked and evident. They reach toward to those things that are before, and press towards the prize. They are to go on until crowned with eternal perfection. Perseverance is promised. God is gradually drawing them to Himself with love, and unloosing the cords of sin from the soul. Thus the weary traveller is cheered with the certainty of progress. He has proved the promise true, for already he can see the distance behind him, though he has measured it painfully. Thus we have endeavored to show that Christian progress is slow and toilsome, yet it is progress in the right direction. This then is the certain way to glory, honor, and eternal life.

In close connection with this we shall now notice *some of the inevitable consequences of ceasing to progress*. The most cursory reader of the Bible will remember that the believer is commanded to go forward—to make progress. He is urged.

by the most solemn considerations. The will of God, the delights of holiness, and the crown of life are all held before him, and the words upon each are, "Go from strength to strength." This enforcement therefore is divine and authoritative. But suppose we cease to make progress, what then? We answer, there will be—

First: *Declension*. Not only stagnation, but declension. The wheels of the spiritual life not only cease, but at once begin to run back with fearful velocity. Stationary they cannot be. Declension is certain and inevitable, if we cease to go forward. We must come down from our eminence, lower and lower, until we find ourselves worse than at first. If the soul is not gazing upward and Godward, it will gaze earthward. If Christ, the strong, loving magnet, does not draw the soul to Himself, the wordly magnet will draw it to itself. In climbing to heaven, if we loose our hold of Christ we fall backward. Nothing can keep us up. Many foolishly suppose that they can stand, and neither advance nor recede, but soon have they found that this is absolutely impossible. Ceasing to progress is the same as retrogression. This is one of the certain laws of this spiritual life. There will be—

Secondly: *Loss*. The soul is constantly and largely gaining as it approaches the Source of all good. The nearer it comes to the Sun of Righteousness, the more light it has. Thus the Christian knows more, and feels more, the nearer heaven he gets. He becomes heavenly-minded. Gazing on the unruffled face of Jesus, his own soul grows calm and peaceful. In sight of the happiness to be enjoyed, the cross loses its heaviness. Looking upon the jewelled "crown of righteousness," he forgets his "crown of thorns." Listening to heaven's music, his own song grows sweeter. Knowing that mansions are prepared above, he is less unwilling to leave his earthly one. All these thoughts, feelings, and prospects are increased the farther he advances. What a fullness of joy is this! What exquisite pleasures! What springs of enjoyment! Worlds could not purchase the smallest of them. The Christian has all this, and far more before him; but it is

when he is going "from strength to strength" he has a heavenly prospect and atmosphere. But let him stand still and cease to rise, then he will begin to descend. He will suffer loss at every step, his prospects and hopes will be clouded, and his peace gradually depart. All may depart. How terrible the loss! In this way, Christ is reviled and religion dishonored. The foundations of repentance have again to be laid in tears of blood, and the journey is more difficult than ever. Whenever the Christian comes down from his elevation to the world-level, it is a declaration stronger than words that there is nothing above worth having. So the world takes it. How important, therefore, that our "path be as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day." What help we require to enable us even to go "from strength to strength"—to make any advance at all; for the way is not only difficult, but our nature is so weak, our powers so paralyzed, and our wills so perverse, that we need God's assistance to progress in the least. How urgent, then, should be our prayers, and how strong our faith in Christ, that we may rise higher and higher, until we reach eternal life. W. DARWENT.

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## Biblical Exegesis.

1 THESS. v. 21.

πάντα δοκιμάζετε  
τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε.

*English Version* :—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

THERE can be no doubt that our translators, in using the word *prove*, intended it to be understood in the old sense of *try*, or *put to the test*. The text, however, is often quoted as if it were a direction to believe nothing without demonstrative argument—a meaning which would be opposed to the whole tenor of apostolic teaching. This sentence is evidently

to be taken in relation to what stands immediately before:—  
 “Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings.” As if he had said, “But do not go to the other extreme; do not receive every prophecy with blind assent, but put all to the test, and hold fast that which is found to be good.” Hammond well paraphrases the passage thus: “Try all those who pretend to extraordinary gifts, and examine whether they have them or no, by that gift of discerning of spirits, and make use of those who approve themselves to have what they profess.”

In another passage, which is very similar to that under consideration, our translators have employed an unequivocal word. 1 John iv. 1. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but *try* (δοκιμάζετε) the spirits, whether they are of God.”

In Rom. xii. 2, the apostle exhorts us to be “transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may *prove*, (that is, ascertain by trial—εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν) what is that will of God, the good and acceptable and perfect.” The will of God is that Christians should be brought into a certain spiritual condition of purity, of oneness with each other and Himself. The perfection and bliss of that condition they can know only by experience. So in Ephes. v. 10, he says, δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστὶν εὐάρεστον τῷ Κυρίῳ, “*proving* what is acceptable to the Lord.”

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1 COR. IV. 4.

οὐδὲν γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ σύννοια.

*English Version* :—“For I know nothing by myself.”

THE verb, of which σύννοια is the second perfect, properly means *to be conscious of*, and in this context is evidently used in a bad sense; but in the English version this is hardly apparent to an ordinary reader. The apostle has been speaking just before of the faithfulness required in stewards, and in himself as a “steward of the mysteries of God.” There was a party in the Corinthian Church who were violently opposed to St. Paul. He tells them that his fidelity

as a steward is not to be tried by them. (verse 3.) It is of very small consequence (ἐλάχιστόν) to him what they think of him ; nay, he will not even judge himself. Though if he were to judge himself, he could not condemn himself for unfaithfulness—"I am not conscious to myself of any evil." This, however, is not sufficient for the settlement of the question. He looks beyond the judgment of the Corinthians, and the judgment of his own conscience. "He that judgeth me is the Lord."

The student will notice in the 3rd verse, a singular sense of the word *ἡμέρα*, *day*, correctly rendered judgment in our version. *The day of the Lord*, is the day of the Lord's judgment. (2 Pet. iii. 10.) As it were by a kind of mocking antithesis, the apostle here speaks of man's judgment as *man's day*.

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## The Chair of Theology.

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[This position we have rather been elected to by others, than arrogantly assumed of ourselves. Studious young men, in and out of orders, are adopting the custom of asking us for information and advice respecting a course of theological study, the choice of books, and the like. The thought has occurred, that it would be for their advantage, and our convenience, to throw such remarks as we are able to offer into a systematic form, once for all, that our correspondents may be referred to a standing document.]

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For the study of the New Testament, the ancient versions must not be past over. Of these the chief are the Peshito Syriac and the Vulgate. Since the Syriac is a dialect of the Hebrew, the chief difficulty will be to acquire familiarity with the characters and the *two* systems of punctuation. If the student is not disposed to enter upon Hoffmann's quarto (Halle, 1827), he may find B. H. Cooper's Abridgment (Williams & Norgate) sufficient for his purpose. The Messrs. Bagster have published a small Syriac Lexicon, uniform with a Testament ; but the Testament published in quarto by the Bible Society has larger and better type.

*Possessed of the apparatus we have described, the student*

should now proceed to investigate the words and phrases of Scripture. When language is to be used as a vehicle of revelation, either of two things is conceivable. A diction altogether new, and perfectly adapted for the conveyance of the new thoughts may be introduced, or the diction already in common use may be modified, elevated, and transfigured by the acquisition of heavenly significances, without destroying the earthly and old. It is evident that the former side of the alternative would involve the miraculous impartation, or the laborious acquisition of a new language, in the case of all to whom the revelation was made. The latter side of the alternative is the one chosen, which, besides greater facility, has this advantage, that according to the analogy of Divine dealing with man, it combines the human and the Divine elements. In the diction of Scripture, the presence of both is plainly to be perceived.

In regard to the diction of Holy Writ, some of the things which first strike the student are—

The remarkable absence, except in one or two of the later Books, of terms of technical theology ;

The natural and often material origin of nearly every word which is made to stand for a spiritual conception ;

The elasticity of many of the original terms, which, while they conveyed sufficient information to the earlier readers, are capable of, and are seen actually to bear, a fuller significance in a more advanced stage of physical and mental science ;

The unity of conception and expression which pervades the the documents of Revelation, although ranging through a long succession of centuries. Although new words and notions are added in the latter revelations, the old ones are preserved, and are seen to be congruous and homogeneous with the new.

These facts produce in the candid mind an irresistible conviction of the presence of over-ruling Divine wisdom and power.

In investigating the words of Scripture, the student is advised to pursue some such course as the following :—

Let him arrange, by help of the Concordances, all theological words under three divisions :

(1) Those that are peculiar to the Old Testament, that is, those whose equivalents in the Septuagint are not found in the New.

(2) Those which, originating with the Old Testament, have past through the Septuagint into the New.

(3) Those which are peculiar to the New Testament, that is, which are not used in the Septuagint as translations of any Hebrew word.

It is evident that we have the fullest means of investigating words of the second class ; that even for those of the first class the Septuagint affords much assistance ; but that for the third, we are thrown entirely on etymology, the context, and other passages in which the words occur, in the New Testament, and other Greek writings, especially those of the Fathers.

The etymology of every word of whatever class, is to be carefully investigated by the light of modern philology ; attention also being given to the old interpretations, which, for the Hebrew, when that is in question, may be found in Fuerst ; for the Greek, in Suicer.

Then investigate the context, which will often determine the meaning. Various senses of the same word will sometimes appear in different contexts.

Observe the contextual associations of words, even when the words have no particular separate importance.

When an Old Testament passage is cited in the New, the sense in which it is manifestly understood by the citer is authoritative.

Observe synonyms, and distinguish shades of meaning. Hebrew synonyms will often be indicated by the use of the same Greek word for them in the Septuagint. And Greek synonyms will often be indicated by their standing in the Septuagint for the same Hebrew word.

If a word is habitually associated with others in standing phrases, let this be noted.



In investigating the meaning of an important word, the *first instance* in which it occurs should be well examined, with all the associations and attendant circumstances. For example, Gen. vi. 9 :—"Noah was a *just* (*tsaddik*) (δικαιος) man." Again, Gen. xv. 6 :—"And he believed (*vheemin*) (καὶ ἐπίστευσεν) in Jehovah, and he counted it (*vay-yachsh'vcha*) (καὶ ἐλογίσθη) to him righteousness (*ts'dakah*) (εἰς δικαιοσύνην)."

Words and phrases apparently unimportant in the Old Testament may not be so in the New. But in these cases the use of the Old must still be examined and compared.

All prominent theological passages should receive especial attention.

The Prayer Book version of the Psalms sometimes gives useful hints about the meaning of words, and the use of old English diction. Wycliffe's translation of the Bible is sometimes more correct, and often more beautiful, than King James's.

Hints as to the relation of the Hebrew and the Greek may be gained from the Peshito Syriac version of the New Testament. A similar service, though of course less authoritatively, may be rendered by a good Hebrew translation of the New Testament.

In investigating the usage of New Testament words, observe—the usage in the same Book, and then in other productions of the same writer. Then proceed to the Septuagint, if the word be there, and notice the corresponding Hebrew word or words. If you desire additional light, recourse may be had to the Apocryphal Books, and to Philo, Josephus, and the Fathers, by the aid of Grinfield and Suicer; and lastly, to the Greek classical writers, by the aid of Schleusner. The Syriac as well as the Vulgate version will be very serviceable in regard to the senses of words, and the rendering of passages.

A vast and indefinite quantity of inestimable exegetical matter is scattered in the works of standard English divines; particularly in Beveridge, Bull, Lightfoot, Joseph Mede, John Smith of Cambridge, Stillingfleet, Edward Chandler, and

Waterland. And some modern writers—as Pye Smith and Trench, and, amongst the Germans, Stier, Olshausen, Ebrard, and innumerable articles in Herzog's Encyclopædia, will repay a prolonged and careful search.

Important suggestions concerning the doctrinal references of passages, may be gathered from the appointment, in the English Prayer Book, of certain Psalms and Lessons for certain days.

When words and phrases have been well investigated, they should be arranged in groups, and thus gradually and cautiously systematized—not according to any artificial and forced metaphysical scheme, but according to the natural laws of affinity, and comparative prominence.

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## The Christian Year.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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### *Christmas Day.*

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”—Luke ii. 14.

THESE words, so often heard before, always repeated at this season, never weary us. They come with freshness every time. Why is this? But very few words and phrases, however good, will bear this constant iteration and re-iteration. It is so with Scripture generally, with the Book of Common Prayer, and with a few of our very choicest hymns. Some compositions please us at first, and afterwards seem stale, dull, flat and unprofitable. We could not live upon sweetmeats, but we eat bread every day. The truth of Scripture is the bread of life. It needs no recommendation but itself, nothing to set it off. It pleases best when presented just as it is. One of the greatest charms of the evangelists is their simplicity. They are too much taken up with their subject to *obtrude themselves*; too full of reverent earnestness to

make a show of their own abilities. Therefore we never tire of the Gospels. Like pictures of the old masters, we recur to them again and again, and find both that their beauty never wears out, and that there is some new beauty we did not observe before.

The angel "brought good tidings of great joy to the *shepherds*." The Gospel at the very outset is "preached to the poor." You remember that when John the Baptist sent from the prison to ask whether Jesus was the Christ, the Lord answered by an enumeration of signs, of which this was the last and the most convincing, "to the poor the Gospel is preached ;" the poor are evangelized. Christ is the Saviour of men, and of men the poor are the greater number. Christ is the Saviour of such as need deliverance, and the mean and needy worldly condition of many of the hearers of the Gospel, is an apt figure of their spiritual poverty. Christ is the Saviour predicted by Isaiah, who declared that He should "preach the Gospel to the poor."

The *angel* "brought good tidings of great joy to the shepherds." Christ's apostles were not angels, but men. The preachers of the Gospel now are human. They who have the same nature as their hearers, the same needs, the same sin and misery, and the same share in the Gospel, are the most fitting preachers of it. They can speak with familiar sympathy. But at the outset, in order to excite the greater attention, and make a brilliant commencement, the Gospel was preached by an angel. Heaven sent forth its inhabitants to show the greatness of the event, to signify the interest which is felt there in the affairs of earth, this inferior province of the Lord's dominion, to illustrate the communion of angels in the affairs of the kingdom of God.

When the shepherds first saw the angel and his glory, *they were sore afraid*. This was generally the effect of those appearances of beings superior to men, which are recorded in Scripture. The terror which an angel strikes into the human breast, is twofold. We have an instinctive dread of the spiritual and the supernatural; we quail before manifestations

of glory and mysterious might, so far more excellent than our own. Then, *as sinners*, we shudder to come in contact with beings to whom sin is unknown, we are rebuked by their purity, and we fear lest they be messengers of vengeance. The first business of the celestial messenger is to remove this dread. He cannot deliver his message with advantage to a man whose faculties are paralyzed with terror. The hearers must be set at ease. Accordingly we often find in Scripture that the angel opens his address with the cheering exhortation, *fear not*.

This angel's Gospel is one of *great joy*. It is not merely good, but joyous ; not barely joyous, but greatly so. Great joyfulness is a test of the Gospel. If a man who professes to preach the Gospel preaches a doctrine which is *not* fitted to produce great joy, believe him not. His doctrine is false. Great joy is also a test of character. A melancholy Christian is a sore hindrance to the church. His foolish and ignorant misery confirms the vulgar error that godliness is gloomy. If he knew the Gospel, he would be happy. If you examine the Creed, you will find that it is *greatly joyful* in every article. "I believe in God the Father Almighty." Doubt is a state of disquiet, and a sign of weakness ; belief is satisfaction, joy, and strength. I *believe*. I believe in *God* : a Being supreme over all others, in eternal holiness and blessedness, and the inexhaustible Fountain of good. Is not this *great joy* ? Is it not *great joy* to have an *Almighty Father* ? So of every article of that most precious Creed. He who can stand up and say with all his heart, "I *believe* it," is, and must be, a *greatly joyful* man.

These good tidings which were brought first to the shepherds, belonged to *all the people* ; and not only to that people of the Jews, but to all the peoples of the earth.

The burthen of the message was *the birth of a Saviour, Christ the Lord*. He was born in the *City of David* ; the fittest place, since David was the darling king of the people, and his memory was cherished with yearning ; the fittest place, because it had been pointed out by prophecy. So far

everything must have seemed to the shepherds right and in its place, and this must have filled them with confidence and courage. What more likely and fitting, than that if a Saviour was born at all, if the Christ was born, He should be born in *the City of David?*

A *Saviour*. One who shall deliver the nation from its present degradation, and bring back old freedom, and privilege, and glory;—a Saviour who shall deliver each of you from inward and outward sorrows, who shall cut off the source, and dig out the root of sorrow, by taking away sin. Christ, so long promised and hoped for, is come at last. This is no deception to lead you to destruction, but the simple truth. Christ the Lord is born; Jehovah, the God of your fathers, who led them by a cloudy pillar through the desert, and dwelt among them between the cherubim, is now once more come down to deliver you; but this time not in a flaming bush, but more advantageously, intimately, and accessibly, even in human form. He is born in the City of David. Go and you will find Him *in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger*.

This angelic Christmas preacher delivered his message alone, but as soon as he had ended, he was suddenly joined by an angelic choir of Christmas singers. Such music has never since been heard on earth at any season of the year. The notes were finer than the tones of the organ, or of the harp, or even of the wind-harp, or of the sweetest human voice, whether woman's or child's. The tune was grander than any of our melodies, but if the shepherds could have remembered it, they would have been unable to sing it. The harmony was perfect. But though the tune of this Christmas music is lost, the words are preserved. They declare and celebrate the results of the wondrous Birth—*the glory of God, the well-being of men*.

All that God does *glorifies* Him, that is, reveals Him for the admiring worship of His creatures. When He spake light out from darkness, and saw that it was good, it was a creaturely shadow of Himself, a ray of His glory. The

numerable forms of beauty and sounds of music, which in nature delight our senses and rouse our understandings to inquiry, are but so many manifestations of Divine thoughts. He who is the best acquainted with them will in this respect know the most of God. So in His dealings with men, God has made known the beauty of His goodness, the majesty of His justice. But the coming of Christ is God's great work. More of Him is revealed here than any other where. The more we know of Christ, of His words and works, the brighter His glory appears. And as the triumphs of the Gospel increase, and Christ ever more widely softens, and sweetens, and beautifies men's hearts and lives, the glory will increase; till at last, when all enemies are overcome, and the Lord leads His church to the eternal kingdom, it shall shine without let or interruption, more and more brightly for ever. The birth of Christ was also to bring *peace on earth*. In the diction of Scripture *peace* is a word of wide and deep meaning—comprehending every kind of well-being, and ranging from the mere greeting of Eastern civility to the blessing pronounced by the departing Lord. We may think of *peace with God*, whose mercy has triumphed over our sin, and who reveals Himself in Christ as our Father. We may think of *peace within*—the old war between the conscience and the passions having been at last ended by strength, graciously imparted to the conscience to enable it to recover rightful dominion; of *peace within*—the man no longer distracted by indefinite longings after he knows not what, and satiated with vain shows, but finding rest in the loveliness and the love of Christ. We may think of *peace between man and man*, which has been interrupted only by our immoderate desires, and will cease when these are under the control of conscience.

The word *goodwill*, in the last clause of the angels' song, does not mean benevolence, but the purpose of God's will which He has *seen fit* to form, and which *pleases* Him when carried into execution. From this last clause—whether we read it as it stands in our English Testaments, or as it appears

in some excellent copies, *among men of goodwill*, we learn two things:—

First: *That the blessing of peace, peace with God, peace within, and peace with our brethren, we owe entirely to the Divine goodwill.* God has sent His Son to accomplish His own decree and make peace between Him and mankind. In fulfilment of the same decree, the Blessed Spirit enters the world of disquietude which is within us, maintains the authority of law, and brings about order and happiness. This is “according to the good-pleasure of His will.”

In fulfilment of the same decree, the Blessed Spirit sanctifies our relations and intercourse with our fellows in the Church and in the world, and we “prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

From the last clause of the angels’ song we learn—

Secondly: *That peace on earth is regarded by God with satisfaction.* War *with* man is against God’s will. The peace was broken by man; it is restored by God, and when restored, delights Him, because He desires our happiness. War *within* man is against God’s will. He takes pleasure in the humble and contrite spirit. War *amongst* men is against God’s will. He willeth that neighbour live in harmony with neighbour, and nation with nation. He predicts a time when “nation shall no longer lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” When God’s word “commanded the light to shine out of darkness,” He “saw the light that it was good.” So, when He “shines into our hearts,” and brings peace and order where was confusion, He pronounces His work to be good. The poet was near uttering a great truth who said

“An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”

Had he put *holiness* for *honesty*, which it includes, he had spoken well. When the Church is at last perfected in heaven, God will delight in her immeasurably more than in all the handiwork of the firmament. His *will*, which Christ came to do, will have been done, even our sanctification, and that *will* being proved, will be found good, and acceptable, and perfect.

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### JACOB'S DREAM ; OR, MAN'S SPIRITUAL CAPACITY.

"And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep," &c.—Gen. xxviii. 10—22.\*

REMARKS on the philosophy and uses of dreams will be found elsewhere in the "Homilist." The dream of Jacob, whilst it has the signature of Divinity, seems to have much of the human in its origination. Dreams, like clouds, abound on a troubled atmosphere. The atmosphere of Jacob's soul was very tumultuous the night he reached Bethel. First: *He had just left his home.* The period when the youth leaves the parental roof and goes forth into the world himself, is always one of great agitation. Some of us remember it well. We remember saying "Adieu" to parents whose hearts were too full for speech, crossing the threshold, looking back through floods of tears, giving and receiving the farewell wave of the hand. The desolation of that hour is still fresh in memory.

\* See "Homilist," Vol. VI. p. 396.

We had to take an untrodden path, enter a cold world, and there battle for ourselves. Secondly: *He had just left his home alone.* Sometimes youths leave their home in company with their young companions, who go forth for the first time into the world with them. They cheer each other up in that trying moment, and their talk in a few hours helps to deaden the agony of the wound. Their young poetry soon makes the future so bright that the past recedes into the shade. But Jacob went forth *alone.* He had no ear into which to pour his sympathies, no one whose words could relieve the darkness of the hour. Thirdly: *He had just left his home alone under a sense of crime.* He had practised a falsehood on a dying father, and robbed his brother of a blessing intended for him. His father "trembled" at the enormity, and his brother "wept" at the injustice and his soul cried for revenge. Jacob leaves with the pressure of this crime upon his soul, and with the threats of Esau ringing in his ears. Such was Jacob's state of mind when he reached Bethel and laid down his wearied frame



to sleep, with cold stones for his pillow and the sable heavens for his covering. In his sleep he had this dream. This dream reveals two things.

I. THE EXISTENCE OF A SPIRITUAL CAPACITY IN MAN. He "saw," and "heard," and "felt" things which lie beyond the reach of the senses—things which belong to the great universe of spirit. (1) He *saw* angels, and God Himself. (2) He *heard* the voice of the Infinite; words came unto him fresh from the mouth of the Eternal Himself. (3) He *felt* emotions which mere animal existence could not experience, which the material universe could not produce. Man, thou hast a capacity within thee which connects thee with the spiritual, the Divine, and the eternal.

II. THE AWAKENING OF THIS SPIRITUAL CAPACITY IN MAN. It had been asleep. "God is in this place, and I knew it not." Whilst his soul was asleep he committed those awful crimes; whilst asleep he felt that this earth was everything. In it he lived, and moved, and had his being. He felt and knew nothing beyond it. But now it is awake, it teems with spiritual existences, it is full

of God, it is vocal with the thoughts of the Eternal. Two or three remarks are suggested about the waking of this spiritual capacity now. First: *It is sometimes unexpected.* Little did the patriarch think what a new world would open up to him at Bethel. The woman of Samaria, Saul of Tarsus, the Philippian jailer, are all examples of the unexpected way in which this change takes place in man. Secondly: *It is always Divine.* God came to him in this dream, unsealed the ear, and opened the eye of his spiritual capacity. Thirdly: *It is ever glorious.* Jacob now had a new universe, a new experience, a new life. Fourthly: *It is ever memorable.* He raised a stone to commemorate it. Wherever this change takes place, is a memorable place—a consecrated place. There, is the starting of a new history, the dawn of a new epoch, the birth of a new life.

In conclusion, a word to the worldling. God and His spiritual universe are round about you, and you know it not. You deny the fact, perhaps, because you do not realize it; but you perceive it not because your spiritual capacity is dormant, your spiritual sense is closed in sleep. The man who is born

blind, may say there is no light, no beauty. He who is deaf, may say there is no such thing as sound. Still a thousand orbs light up the world, beauty floods the universe, and melodious sounds float in every breeze. Open the eye and the ear, and he will feel them. So it is with spiritual things.

A word to the godly. How great your privileges! There is a God watching over you, and angels are your attendants. They are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

"How oft do they their silver bowers  
leave,  
To come to succor us, that succor  
want?  
How oft do they with golden pinions  
cleave  
The flitting skies, like flying pursui-  
vant,  
Against foul fiends, to aid us mili-  
tant?  
They for us fight, they watch, and  
duly ward,  
And their bright squadrons round  
about us plant;  
And all for love, and nothing for  
reward."

#### GOD'S RELATION TO THE GOOD.

"Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting."—Isa. lxiii. 16.

THE text leads us to consider God's relation to the good in two aspects.

#### I. AS A FACT MOST ENCOURAGING UNDER TRIAL.

The preceding verse evidently shows, that the good people who employed the words of the text, wherein sore trouble. "Where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained?" Yet under their distress, they take encouragement in the close and tender relationship which existed between God and them. First: *He is their everlasting Father.* "Thou art our Father." "Thy name is from everlasting." The word "Father" implies—(1) Spiritual causation. He begot them to a new spiritual life. He gave them that new heart and new spirit that constituted them, His children. The word "Father" implies—(2) Spiritual resemblance. Children are like their parents. Like begets like. The good resemble the Infinite in the controlling of the spirit and purpose of their being. The word "Father" implies—(3) Spiritual education. The work of the Father is to educate his children, to train their faculties, to discharge the ever multiplying responsibilities of their existence. God is the great teacher of the good. "Who teacheth like Him?" The word "Father" implies—(4) Spiritual providence. The work of a father is to provide for his children, to make all

the necessary arrangements for their future well-being. God provides for the good. His provisions are varied, abundant, complete, everlasting. Is not this relation a source of the highest encouragement to the good under trial? To have such a Father as this, whose name is everlasting! Earthly fathers die and leave their children orphans. Secondly: *He is their everlasting Redeemer.* "Our Redeemer." This implies—*original captivity.* The best of men were once in moral bondage, once in a slavery worse than that of Egypt. They were servants of sin. It implies—*present deliverance.* That deliverance was effected by God Himself. No arm but His could break the chain, and unbolt the prison doors. He did it, the everlasting One. Earthly friends, who have rendered us services, die, but He our great Redeemer lives for ever. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Here then is encouragement for the good. "Can a woman forget her sucking child," &c. "Who shall separate us from the love of God," &c. The text leads us to consider God's relation to the good.

II. As a fact independent of MAN'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT. "Doubtless thou art our

father, though Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not"—two of the greatest men in Jewish history, the venerated ancestors of the Hebrew race. The idea is that their relationship to God was a fact, whether these great men knew it or not. A good man's relation to God is a fact, independent of the recognition of the greatest men. First: *It is a fact independent of the recognition of the politically great men.* Kings, nobles, heroes, may regard you a pauper beneath their notice; albeit you are a child of God. The fact remains unaltered. Secondly: *It is a fact independent of the recognition of scientifically great men.* Astronomers, geologists, physiologists, metaphysicians may not know you, or may despise you as ignorant and uncultured; albeit you are a child of God. The fact is unaltered. Thirdly: *It is a fact independent of the recognition of ecclesiastically great men.* Primates, bishops, doctors of churches may denounce you as schismatic or heretic; albeit you are the child of God. The fact is unaltered. "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us," &c. Blessed be the man who has JEHOVAH for his Father and Redeemer. He will rise superior to all the trials of

life, and exult in the prospects of all that may await him in the future.

#### THE BURIAL OF STEPHEN.

"And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."—Acts viii. 2.

THERE is a fact here in connection with a dead man not very common.

I. NOT ALL MEN THAT DIE ARE BURIED. The bones of many are left to bleach in the open winds, or rot in the depths of ocean. Some are consumed by fire, some are devoured by wild beasts, and some are thrown into the rivers—as in the case of the Ganges—and left to the mercy of the elements, and the ravenous beasts of prey. God alone knows how many of the human race moulder into dust unshrouded, uncoffined, and unknelled.

II. NOT ALL THAT ARE BURIED ARE LAMENTED. The death of many is felt to be a deliverance, and often, too, where there is the mimicry of sorrow and the pageantry of mourning. Who could lament the death of the tyrant, the oppressor, the persecutor, the churl, or the heartless miser? The lives, alas, that many live here are so thoroughly cold, selfish,

ill-tempered, that they fail to awaken any sympathy in their circle, and their death is felt to be a blessed relief. Few sights are more sad to a thoughtful mind than to witness—as most ministers have—a deceased father, mother, master, committed to the earth, with relations around the grave, with no tear in the eye, no regret in the heart. Their lives had won no love, and their death could draw no tear.

III. NOT ALL THAT ARE LAMENTED ARE LAMENTED BY THE DEVOUT. There is often the sorrow of the worldling and the selfish, because of the secular loss experienced. A politician who has served the temporal interests of his country, a merchant on whose transactions numbers are dependent, the companion who has ministered to the gratifications of others will be lamented, but not by devout men, as such.

Now Stephen was not only buried and lamented, but lamented by *devout* men. Why was this? The following reasons may be suggested. (1) He had embodied their ideal of man. They felt they carried the corpse of one that approached their idea of what a man ought to be. They had witnessed his self-sacri-

ficing labors, heard his noble defence for the truth, and observed the sublime spirit with which he met his martyrdom. They felt they were burying a *man*—not a merchant, not an artist, not a priest, &c.—but a *man*. Well might the devout weep over the death of a *man* ! (2) His martyrdom had revealed the iniquity of their age. The moral obliquity, injustice, and heartless cruelty which their countrymen displayed in his persecution, must have filled them with inexpressible grief. (3) His departure was a grievous loss to the cause of godliness and humanity. His zealous efforts and his earnest prayers were over. No wonder that these devout men lamented Stephen's death.

#### THE POWER OF SATAN OVER MEN.

"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace."—Luke xi. 21.

CHRIST employs this sentence in speaking of the devil's influence over men, and whilst we remember that it is figurative, we must give to the figure more than ordinary significance, for it is a figure of the Great Teacher whose every word was weighted with wisdom and fraught with truth. Concerning, then, the

devil's power over men, this figure reminds us—

I. IT IS THE POWER OF A STRONG BEING. Our own experiences and the history of the world would lead us to believe this ; but our proofs now shall be drawn from the Bible. First : *The names by which the Bible denominates him.* Almost every such title has reference to his power. Apollyon, Beelzebub, Prince of this world, Prince of the power of the air, God of this world. And the creatures that the Scriptures use as emblematical of him are the strongest. The serpent, whose mortal fang stings, and whose awful coil crushes to death ; the roaring lion, the king of the beasts of the forest ; the old dragon, which was to eastern minds an incarnation of almost resistless power. Secondly : *The work that the Bible attributes to him.* He introduced sin into this world, and is the arch rebel in God's kingdom ; he is the leader of the legions of sin in earth and in hell ; he "leads the world captive at his will ;" he is so mighty, that in the encounter with him even the youths faint and are weary, and the young men utterly fall ; so mighty, that to obtain the victory over him the Son of God becomes incarnate and dies ; so

mighty, that though he is finally bruised in the head, he bruises the heel of the Son of Man.

II. IT IS THE POWER OF A STRONG BEING, ARMED. The strength of the great enemy is not cumbersome, unwieldy power. He uses "wiles," "depths," "darts," "snares," "all deceivableness of unrighteousness." He suits himself to those with whom he has to do,—arms himself with weapons to which his victims are vulnerable. His weapons are too numerous for description, or even enumeration. The arts, the sciences, the literature, nay, even the affections of men he transforms into weapons wherewith he girds himself and assails our souls. This makes him far more formidable than his mere strength or power.

III. IT IS POWER OVER A VERY PRECIOUS POSSESSION. When he obtains the power he is ever seeking over men, he has power over "a palace." Every man is a palace. Look at his *body*, whether that body be of the ebony of Africa, or the fairer hues of temperate climes, it is a palace "fearfully and wonderfully made," a palace whose "builder and maker is God." Where, even in classic lands and ages, can any palace be

found having such exquisite contrivances as the eye and ear of man, or possessing the beauty and symmetry of the human form. Look at his *mental and moral nature*, and see in the palace such "goods" as palace walls have never contained. What jewels, what regalia, costly and royal, are the memory, the imagination, the reason, the affections. Within us are "goods" of a world rather than of a palace. It is over this "palace," the body, and over these "goods," the mental and moral nature of man, that Satan seeks to obtain power. Sin abuses and degrades the body. The feet, the hands, the eyes, are they not often all employed in the service of sin? And Satan is not content with mere outward service, although he tempts the formalist and the hypocrite to believe that God will be. He lays his loathsome hand on every power of our spirit, every possession of our soul.

IV. IT IS OFTEN THE COMPLETE POWER OF A STRONG BEING, ARMED. Of this complete power of Satan over man, Christ speaks when he says the "goods are kept in peace." There is a conqueror having obtained so perfect a victory, that he holds his possessions in peace. So it literally is with the devil's power over

some men. He gradually extends over them his power, overcoming first in one temptation, and then in another, till the flag of rebellion against God waves from the turret, and the heraldry of hell is emblazoned on the walls of this "palace." So with the countenance of the drunkard, debauchee, and I think also of the wilful sceptic. There are mentioned in the Scriptures two stages through which evil men pass. In the first, they are "servants of Satan," because of the strivings of their conscience, and of God's Spirit, they find some of the commands of sin to be irksome and painful. They are servants, working for wages. Sinning not for the love of sin, but for what they can get from it. Then there are those who become "children" of Satan. Christ calls them the "children of hell." They then anticipate sin, they glory in their shame. Without any sense of com-

pulsion they perform Satan's horrid will. Like a young convict of whom we read, who after a series of precocious crimes that had brought him at the dawn of manhood to the penal cell, and who sat there, not disconsolate and heart-broken, as a man in such circumstances might well be, but with diligent toil rubbing the chains that bound his limbs; his eyes looking with delight in their silver-like sheen. So do some men rejoice in their iniquity. Such is the peace of the man over whom Satan has completely triumphed. It is the peace of an iron slavery—the peace of a fatal slumber—the peace of death. Better far all the horrors of the bloodiest war. In view, then, of such considerations we say, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." "Put on the whole armour of God," &c.

U. R. THOMAS.

*Bristol.*

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### GREAT FRENCH PREACHERS.

*(Continued from p. 297.)*

Bossuet was a greater man, but not a greater preacher than his eloquent contemporary. The reputation derived from his vast learning, his controversial ability, his knowledge

of affairs, and his strength of will, we very naturally transfer to his preaching, which was nevertheless of consummate excellence. As an author, especially as a master of style, he surpasses them all, if indeed he does not surpass all who ever wrote in French. The power

of that somewhat intractable language was never more fully brought out than by Bossuet, to whom the crown of eloquence is, therefore, given by Voltaire. He was the orator for courts, and we suppose no prince in ancient or modern times ever had a nobler panegyrist. To learn his argumentative eloquence, we must look to his other works; but in his celebrated Funeral Orations, we have unequalled examples of sublime and original conceptions, arrayed in a diction majestically simple and yet triumphantly splendid. The term which characterizes the discourses of Bossuet is magnificence. We believe it to be admitted by French critics that his style is as faultless as that of any writer in any tongue.

There are those who consider Massillon the greatest of French preachers; and the award is just, if we confine our regards to simple elegance of style, traits of nature, strokes of pathos, perfect contexture of the entire performance and irresistible command of assemblies, and in elocution. Being thirty years younger than the men we just named, he represents a different school, but it is one which he founded himself. When Father Latour, on his arrival at the capital, asked him what he thought of the great orators, he replied, "I find them possessed of genius and great talent; but if I preach, I will not preach like them." Great clearness of thought, perfect sobriety of judgment, profound knowledge of the human heart and of manners, a fund of tender emotion, novelty of illustration, copiousness of language, perspicuous method, and unerring taste, are the characteristics of Massillon. He simplified the divisions of the sermon, and reduced its length, conforming the whole treatment to the most classic models. He is sparing in his citations and unob-

trusive in his array of argument. Beyond all competitors, he dissects the heart, reveals the inmost windings of motive, and awakens the emotions of terror, remorse, and pity. In the ethical field, he excels in depicting vice and awakening conscience, in pursuing pride, avarice, and self-love to their retreats, and exposing and stigmatizing the follies of the great. When the aged Bourdaloue heard him, he pointed him out, as he descended from the pulpit, saying, "Hunc oportet crescere, me autem minui." Baron, the great actor, said of him to a companion, "My friend, here is an orator; as for us, we are but actors." Whole assemblies were dissolved in tears, or started to their feet in consternation. When he preached the funeral sermon of the King, on the words, "Lo, I have become great;" he commenced by repeating them slowly, as if to recollect himself: then he fixed his eyes on the assembly in mourning; next he surveyed the funeral enclosure, with all its sombre pomp; and, lastly, turning his eyes on the mausoleum erected in the midst of the cathedral—after some moments of silence, exclaimed, *Dieu seul est grand, mes freres*. "My brethren, God alone is great!" The immense assembly was breathless and awestruck. Voltaire always had on his table the *Petit-Carême* of Massillon, which he regarded as the best model of French prose.

There are discourses of Massillon, which, with the omission of the *Ave Maria*, and a few superficial forms, might be delivered to any Protestant assembly. The union of simple elegance and strong passion has given his sermons a formative influence in every language of Europe; and they stand at the head of what may be called the modern school of preaching.



Space would fail us, if we were to enlarge upon Fenelon, Fléchier, Bridaine, and other pulpit orators of less note. Chastely beautiful as is the style of Archbishop Fenelon, it is not exactly that which belongs to eloquence. The saintly gentleness of his temper, as well as the doctrines of Quietism which he had embraced, were not the best preparations for passionate oratory. Among his numerous and often delightful works, the number of sermons is not very large. One reason of this may be, that he favored the extemporaneous method, of which, in his Dialogue on Eloquence, he is the ablest vindicator. There is a sermon of

Fenelon's on Foreign Missions, which is full of fine thoughts, and worthy of examination.

The Protestant Churches of France, and of the Refugees, produced some great preachers, of whom the most famous are Claude and Saurin. For solid doctrinal discussion, elaborated into the form of eloquent discourse, the preacher last named continues to be admired. In our own day, there has been a revival of Protestant eloquence, in such men as Vinet, Grandpierre, and Adolphe Monod; and Parisian crowds still follow Lacordaire, Ravignan, Felix, and de Courtier.

DR. ALEXANDER.

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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**THE GOSPEL TREASURY; OR, TREASURY-HARMONY OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.** Compiled by ROBERT MIMPRISS. Two volumes in one. Vol. I. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS harmony is in the words of the authorized version, according to "Greswell's Harmonium Evangelicum." It abounds with Scripture illustrations, expository notes from the most approved commentators, and practical reflections. It has also a very copious index. Attention to the minute supplemental relation of one Gospel to another is a duty that cannot be too strongly urged on the student of evangelical history. This volume, by placing each distinct narrative in just opposition, affords a most efficient help to this. No Sunday school teacher, no theological student, no minister of the Gospel, should be without this invaluable volume. Its price is a marvel of cheapness, and the poorest has no excuse for neglecting the use of such a help as this to the study of the Holy Word.

**OUR ETERNAL HOMES.** By a Bible Student. London: F. Pitman.

THIS work is divided into seven chapters, the subjects of which are:—What is Heaven; Heavenly Scenery; Death; the Fate of Life; Do the Departed forget us? Man's book of Life, and Infants in Heaven. Heaven is a common theme. A certain class of religious writers and speakers, generally of the mawkish tribe, have always a deal to say about heaven. They seem to be wondrously familiar with its sceneries and its songs, with its tenants and their doings. They are very familiar with the angels and their harps. A book on heaven, therefore, is no novelty and seldom a prize. The little work before us, however, is an interesting exception. It is wondrously free from the platitudes, presumptions, and pietisings of such works. It contains not a little speculation, bold yet reverent, and has a freshness of thought and expression which make its pages pleasant and profitable.

**BAPTISM: ITS MODE AND SUBJECTS.** By TYPICUS. London: Jackson, Walford & Hodder.

ANOTHER book on baptism! Will zeal for ritualism never cease? Ceremony seems the only heaven of some souls. They live in the realm of religious materialism. The kingdom of heaven is to them meat and drink, washings and dressings. Will men, calling themselves Christians, ever reach the Pauline state of soul, and thank God that they have had a higher work to do than to baptize? Dip or sprinkle as much as you like babes, adults, or both, but do not write volumes about such menial matters. Oh, let type and speech be the vehicles of those Divine and soul renovating thoughts which the world so deeply needs! Circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing, but a new creature in Christ Jesus. We are bound to say, however, that the kind of work the author has set about in this book is done industriously, with considerable ability, and in good temper.

**PREACHING TO THE UNCONVERTED.** An Address by the REV. W. S. LEWIS, M.A., Incumbent of Trinity Church, Ripon, and late Chaplain of Trinity College, Cambridge. York: J. Allom. London: W. Macintosh.

THE talented author of "The Threshold of Revelation," a work which we commended to our readers a few months ago, has done well to publish this address, which he delivered at a clerical meeting at York. A more important subject could not have been selected, nor could it have fallen into abler hands. The remarks are sage-like, suggestive, and scriptural, and the spirit catholic, reverent, and tender. Were the preachers of England to do their high work according to the method and spirit indicated in these pages, the pulpit would become the most royal of all *the intellectual, spiritual, and social forces of our land.*

THE BEGINNINGS OF DIVINE LIFE; a Course of Seven Sermons. By HENRY ROBERT REYNOLDS, B.A. London: Elliot Stock.

WE called the attention of our readers to this work on its first appearance, a few years ago, and we are glad to welcome a second edition. The reason for this cheap edition the author gives as follows:—"The numerous indications that the great Head of the Church has graciously accepted this humble effort to set forth the free and various action of the Spirit of His grace in the renewal of our humanity, encouraged the author of this little volume to believe that an edition of the work, presented in a new form, and at a cost which may facilitate wider circulation, may be found of service by those who are seeking the salvation of the souls of men; and may thus promote the glory of Him, who is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son." We heartily recommend this little volume; it is free from the technicalities of religion, and the narrowness of creeds. It presents the great elements of vital truth, in a language that is intelligible, and with a force that commends it to the common reason, and common conscience of the reader.

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A GUIDE TO THE DAILY READING OF THE SCRIPTURES. London: H. J. Tressider. This is really a good guide. It takes us the shortest and the safest way to the land flowing with milk and honey. Its directions are wise, and its information both interesting and useful. SECRET PRAYER. By REV. CHARLES STANFORD. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. A beautiful little tract on an all-important subject. SANDY FOUNDATIONS. By JOSEPH METCALFE WHITE. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. This is also an earnest and well-written little work. TO EVERY CREATURE; also, JESUS REVEALING THE HEART OF GOD. By J. PULSFORD. London: Elliot Stock. The productions of Mr. Pulsford's pen are always thoughtful, suggestive and hallowing. TWO YEARS AFTER AND ONWARDS. By the Author of "The Coming Struggle." London: Houlston & Wright. We cannot say how much truth there is in this volume, for it is not given to us to know "the times and the seasons;" but there is some decent writing in it. We confess to an utter want of faith or interest in such productions.













